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## The Heir Presumptive and the Heir Apparent.

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OF CARLINGFORD," "NEIGHBOURS ON THE GREEN,"  
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### CHAPTER XXVII.

LADY FROGMORE had not been much disturbed by any external interruption since she had been led away from her husband's room after his death. Poor Mary was very natural in all her ways. She took her sorrow sweetly, like the gentle woman she was. There was an hour or two during which she lay weeping on the bed, saying now and then some broken words—how good he was, her dear old lord, how tender, how kind—and what was she to do without him who had been so good to his poor Mary! Agnes, not crying so much, feeling the dreadful blank and change perhaps more, sat by her sister's bedside and held her hand, and received her broken confidences. Poor Mary did not repine; she did not even grieve as at first that she had not been there when Frogmore was taken ill, that they did not send for her soon enough. Even that had floated away from her mind. The tears came flowing from her eyes and the tender words from her lips. Dear Frogmore! There never had been any one like him, so kind! so kind! How was she to live without her old husband, her dear companion? In Mary's mind there was no consciousness that she had been absent from her husband for years; yet, perhaps, though she was not aware of it, this fact had something to do with the calm of her sorrow. There was no despair in her mourning. By-and-by she allowed herself to be undressed, to take the draught prepared for her and go to bed. Agnes still sat by her thinking of many things, but it did not occur to anybody that Agnes had anything but a very secondary part in the trouble. And Mary slept and woke again and shed more tears,

and then rose up with a patient face and a quiver in her lip, and was very anxious that a black gown might be found somewhere in her wardrobe, turning with a tremor from the others she had been wearing. "I shall never more wear anything but black," she said. A little later she was able to think of her mourning and the mourning for the house: both which had to be seen to without delay. Agnes was ready to write the necessary letters, but Lady Frogmore herself joined in the consultation about what would be wanted, and quietly put down Mrs. Hill's economical suggestions. There were a great many things to think of, and Mary was greatly disturbed to find that a small room which opened from her own was quite open, the sunshine coming in and the outer world visible. "Oh, how is this?" she said; "the blinds are not down nor the shutters closed."—"They are, over all the house, my lady," said the maid; "but I thought just this little room, which nobody can see, which is not seen from outside——"—"Oh, close it, close it at once," said Lady Frogmore. "I can't bear it—and my dear lord lying dead in the house." This made her tears flow again; but when the light was shut out she resumed with her mother and sister the consultation about the mourning. She thought of the paper with the deepest black border, and cards to be printed. It seemed to please her to have this occupation, these trifles which had to be attended to. "I suppose," she said, her voice trembling, her eyes filling, "I must now call myself Dowager on my cards——"

"Oh, no, my dear Mary, no—why should you?—not for years and years."

"You must not think it will hurt me, mother. Oh, no, no! What do I care for anything but losing *him*? It will not vex me to call John by his name—or Letitia——" She stopped again, her voice failing her. "Oh, Letitia," she said, "cannot blame me now. She will have nothing, nothing to say against me now."

"Mary, for goodness' sake, do not speak to me of that woman. I can't bear to hear her name in your mouth," cried Mrs. Hill.

Agnes gave her mother a look, and laid her hand upon her sister's. "There is one other thing, Mary," she said, turning the talk to the mourning. There are times when that mourning is a great relief to the poor people who are shut up with their sorrow and can talk of nothing but the one dreadful subject which fills

heaven and earth. Mary returned to the thought of all those necessary gowns for the housemaids with a sort of dismal relief. But when she was left to herself again, her thoughts returned to Letitia—Letitia was coming in the afternoon. There was in Lady Frogmore's thoughts a faint terror of her former friend mingled with a sort of consolatory consciousness that Letitia could have nothing against her now. All must be right now. Mary's little superiority was over. She would not have been sorry had it not involved the loss of Frogmore, and now that he was gone it was a consolation to think that she no longer stood in anybody's way, that she could injure no one any more. Letitia would forgive her now. There had been no harm done. She could not regret—no, not even for Letitia, that she had married her dear old lord. It seemed to Mary that it had been a very short time, only a few months, since she married Frogmore. And it had done no harm. Letitia would have to acknowledge that now. They were none the worse for it. It gave her a little consolation in the midst of her tears.

Meanwhile John Parke and his wife were travelling gloomily towards Frogmore. It would be vain to say that even John, his brother, was deeply affected by the death of the old lord. That would have been too much to expect in any case. Neither could it be said that during five years past they had thought of nothing but the wrong inflicted upon them by Lord Frogmore's marriage, and the birth of the boy who stood between them and all their hopes of advancement in life. In five years the mind gets accustomed even to such a misfortune as that, and though they may not feel it less, people don't dwell upon a thing so far off as they did when it was fresh in their minds. The death of Lord Frogmore, however, brought it all back to their thoughts. But for Mary, but for that boy, what a changed world it would now have been for them! By this time it was they who would have been Lord and Lady Frogmore. They would have been going to take possession of their own great family house, to come into their fortune. Hope would by this time have become reality to them—if it had not been for Mary and that miserable puny boy. Even John could not help thinking of this as he looked moodily out of the window of the railway carriage and plucked at his moustache. His servants would already have begun to "my lord" him. His difficulties (for he had difficulties though his wife was so excellent

a manager) would all have been over. Good God! and to think that a bit of a sickly child, a creature that nobody wanted, had done him out of all that. It was enough to distract the mind of a saint. As for Letitia, all that and a great deal more was in her mind. She had not been at the Park since that dreadful day when she had discovered what had befallen Mary, and had known that it was she herself who had done it. Since then, though Duke had been a frequent visitor, his parents had never been invited by Frogmore, and Letitia knew why. And now she was going to see Mary, who it was said had recovered all at once and come home. This was a wonderful story, which it was almost impossible to believe; and Letitia, with her guilty conscience, could not but think there was some hidden meaning in it. Mary, suddenly well, returned all in a moment!—it did not seem credible. She set out to accompany John to the house of mourning with very mingled feelings—indignant to have to go there at all, in a position which contrasted so cruelly with her hopes. But also, in spite of all her self-command and capacity for excusing herself, Letitia was afraid in her heart of meeting Mary, terrified for her look, wondering how much she remembered, how much she knew. She could not form an idea to herself how she would be received by her old friend. She was afraid of Mary—afraid lest Lady Frogmore should betray her to John, and make her stolid but upright husband aware of the harm she had done. And also, if truth must be told, Mrs. Parke was afraid of the madwoman whom she had injured, and of whose cure she thought nobody could be certain. She was not a brave woman physically, though it is not necessary to be a coward to fear an insane person. The bravest may quail in such circumstances. An insane person whom you have wronged; who probably will remember the wrong; who will be cunning and vindictive, as mad people are known to be. Letitia's thoughts were not of a pleasant kind as she travelled towards the home of her husband's race. She dared not shrink or refuse to do the duty which was incumbent upon her. But she was white and trembling in her furs, quite unable to get warm or to repress the shiver that ran over her from time to time. John observed this with the terror of a man who had never been apt to meet an emergency by himself. "For goodness' sake," he said, "take something. Have a glass of wine—have a little brandy. I can get you some brandy at the station.



Don't get ill now, Letitia, for heaven's sake." She nodded her head at him with the best smile she could conjure up. She certainly was a faithful woman so far as that was concerned. She would not at such a crisis leave John to his own devices—not whatever might happen. Rather have the lunatic fly upon her than that——. But, all the same, she went on to the Park in terror of her life.

The great house standing all shadowed in the wintry sunshine, every shutter shut and every blind drawn down, was a dismal sight enough, not calculated to raise any one's spirits. The great door was standing open, and inside were several servants, Upjames in the foreground to receive the visitors and show his own pre-eminence. Behind stood the old vicar, with whom and his big head and mumbling voice Letitia felt a sickening familiarity as if he were always there in the worst moments of her life. She remembered him just like that when she had made her assault on the Vicarage in the vain endeavour to frighten Mary from marrying old Frogmore. She had seen him again before the birth of the child. And here he was once more, as she came in cold and trembling, terrified for what was before her. Behind the vicar another man was hanging about, a tall man in a long coat, which swung behind him as he strolled about the hall, stooping, with his shoulders thrust up to his ears. She divined at once that this was the mad-doctor, not yet separated from his patient. Letitia let her fur cloak drop off her shoulders into the footman's hands, and appeared not to see the vicar's hand which was stretched out with the intention of giving her that silent clasp of sympathy which is the right thing in a house of mourning. "Oh, how do you do?" she said. "I am going at once to Mary," and passed him quickly, leaving John to make the explanation. She felt that as far as she herself was concerned the worst must be got over at once. Upstairs in the corridor a woman was standing whom Letitia did not know, too serious for a maid, too important for a servant of the house. "Are you Lady Frogmore's—attendant?" said Mrs. Parke. She was half afraid, as the servants were, of the woman, who, if not mad herself, was a mad nurse. "Yes, my lady," said the stranger, a mode of address which made the heart burn in Letitia's bosom. Ah! but for that child, that wretched little boy, that would be her proper title now. "I am Mrs. Parke," she said breathlessly. "How is Lady Frogmore?"

"Oh, my lady, she is wonderful," said the woman. Lady Frogmore's attendant knew what her mistress thought, and she believed, like Mary, that Mrs. Parke was now in reality Lady Frogmore, though good breeding prevented her from adopting the title until the old lord was buried. "She is as much herself as her dearest friend could wish her—she is as collected as you or me."

"What an extraordinary thing!" said Letitia. "Is it thought to be a complete cure?"

"Ah!" said the nurse, "that no man can tell till time has proved it. Things that come of a sudden sometimes go off on a sudden too. But in the meantime what a blessing, my lady! She was able to be with his lordship to the last. And as calm now, and as composed, though sorrowful, as a lady could be."

"Then she is quite—safe?" said Letitia with a slight shudder.

"My lady!" said the woman with indignation. "She was never but like a blessed lamb even at the worst."

"I know; I know. She was always gentle. Don't think badly of me," said Mrs. Parke, "but I've a great horror of—of that sort of thing. Would you mind coming in with me? And just be near me, please, whatever might happen. It would give me great confidence. If you only look at her, it's enough, isn't it? Oh! do stay by me when I go in, please."

"You are doing my poor lady injustice," said the attendant with outraged dignity.

"Oh, no—not that—but you'll stand by me, won't you?" Letitia said. She went on towards Mary's door with a slackened step. Not even the assurance she had received, not her conviction that what the nurse said was true, could stand against her conscience and sense of what she deserved from Mary. She might be a lamb to others, but Letitia had no right to count upon her as a lamb. When she opened the door she looked back and beckoned to the attendant, who was slowly following. "You'll stand by me?" she said again, and eventually knocked at Mary's door.

Lady Frogmore and her sister were together in the room. Mary had been trying to read a little in a good book. To read anything that might amuse her, that would draw her thoughts from herself and her sorrow would have been profane, almost

wicked. Mary was far too dutiful to think of anything of the kind, but it was not wrong, it was indeed edifying, to read a little of a sermon about heaven. It conveyed, indeed, no idea at all to the poor lady's mind, and to think of Lord Frogmore as having been swept up among those abstractions was quite impossible: but still it was a right thing to do. She put it down, however, with alacrity when she heard Letitia's knock at the door, and came forward a step or two, as much as was decorous, to meet her sister-in-law. A newly-made widow must not hurry forward with extended hands. It is her place to keep still, to have her visitors brought up to her. "Here I and sorrow sit." Mary was very observant of all the conventionalities; but when Letitia, trembling, came up to her and put her shaking arms around her, Mary responded with a cordiality which overwhelmed the visitor. She held Letitia close and wept upon her shoulder, Mrs. Parke trembling all the time, restraining herself with an effort of horror from shrieking, and not at all sure that she might not be rent to pieces at the end of the embrace. "Oh, Letitia! it is all over, all over. My poor old lord is gone," cried Mary, sobbing. She added, a moment after, in a voice that went through and through the hearts of the other listeners, but struck upon that of Mrs. John Parke like some strange chord of which she had no understanding. "And after all there is no harm done to you! It is my only consolation. After all there is no harm done to you!"

"Oh, Mary! It is a sad blow to us all, but we must bear it," said Letitia, disengaging herself from the embrace which she so feared. She cast a glance round to see that the nurse was near, and strengthened by this, sat down at a little distance from the new-made widow. "It is a great loss," she said, putting up her handkerchief to her eyes; "so kind to us as he always was. But we must seek for resignation and strength to bear it."

"Indeed he was kind to everybody," said Agnes, hoping to keep this strange interview upon safe ground.

"And what a good thing you were able to come back to be with him at the last," said Mrs. John.

"My dear Letitia," said Mary, "I can't find words to tell you. You must not think I will feel it that you should have my name—or that Mr. Parke should have his name. Oh, no! I shall not. You must not put aside your rights out of any thought of me. I am only the Dowager now, and you are Lady Frogmore."

"Oh," cried Mrs. John, springing to her feet, "I knew all that was said was nonsense, and that there never would be a cure. Agnes Hill, you may risk your life, but I will not risk mine—at the mercy of a——"

She had sprung up from her chair with a scared face, and hurried towards the door. As for Mary she did not understand this recoil of her sister-in-law from her. "What is it?" she said; "what is it? Why should she have any grudge against me? Tell her, Agnes, that I have no grudge; that I am glad. After all, though she was so frightened of me, I have done her no harm."

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

LETITIA hurried along the passage to the room which she always occupied at the Park, and where Felicie was already arranging her "things" out of the box. She took refuge in this room as in a safe place, and locked the door behind her with an impulse of fright. When, however, she sat down panting to think it over, reassured by these walls and by the tranquil presence of her maid busied about ordinary concerns, and by the conviction that Mary was in the hands of the attendant and would not be allowed to follow her, Mrs. Parke began to perceive that her panic might be thought foolish and that there was really nothing to be afraid of. "For they would never have allowed her to hurt me," she said to herself—"and she did not mean to hurt me, poor thing. She meant to be kind. She was always silly," Letitia said to herself, her old contempt for Mary Hill beginning to get the better of her panic and terror of Lady Frogmore. But her heart again jumped to her mouth when the sound of some one running along the corridor ended in a thump upon the locked door. "Oh, don't open it; don't open it, Felicie!" she said, springing up to hide herself. She was only stopped by the sound of a voice which came in among the drumming. "Mamma, mamma, open—mamma, let me in; I want mamma," said the intruder. Even then Letitia had horrible visions of the madwoman taking advantage of the opportunity, while Duke was admitted, to rush in upon her victim. But even the boy's presence was an additional protection. He would come between her and any assault. He was a big, strong boy. When John Parke came in just behind his son, Letitia felt almost at her ease. Between them,

the man and the boy could surely deal with the maniac. She could not in their presence do any real harm. John Parke's face was covered with clouds ; he was moody and serious, scarcely moving out of his absorbed gravity to receive the eager salutations of Duke, who had been greatly subdued by the melancholy of the house, and delighted to find in the advent of his parents an opening out of the gloom. John went up scowling to his wife, and, standing over her, desired that Felicie might be sent away. "I have something to say to you," he said. Letitia made herself as comfortable as circumstances would permit. She took off her cloak and hat, and had an easy-chair drawn to the fire. Then she sent her maid away and turned to her husband, who had been looking on at these proceedings with impatience.

"Now, what is it?" she said.

"I am glad you can attend to me at last. I want to speak to you about that poor woman and the state of the house."

"What poor woman? Do you mean Mary Hill? You can't tell me much about her, for I have seen her. Talk of cures! She is as mad as a March hare. Duke, just lock the door."

"Why should he lock the door? What I've got to say is of importance. Don't let us have any nonsense!" said John Parke.

"She is as mad—as any one ever was. If she came bursting into the room in that state—I should die. I know I should die."

"They said she was quite quiet," he cried.

"And so she is! very quiet. John, she said she was the Dowager and that I was Lady Frogmore."

"Then you know," said John, "though that was not how they told me. They say she remembers nothing about the little boy. She declares she never had any child; that he is a little boy who was invited to play with Duke; and that Frogmore took a fancy to him and adopted him. Letitia, it's the most wonderful thing I ever heard of, and very exciting to people in our position. Do you hear me? What do you think? Was such a thing ever heard of, that a woman should forget she had a child? I never heard of such a thing. Do you think——?" He looked at her with eyes full of excitement, full of awakened anxiety, and a hundred questions. John Parke was not a clever man; he had never pretended to be: but he had boundless faith in his wife's cleverness, and he brought her this extraordinary question with an unhesitating confidence in her power to draw

something out of it that would be somehow to his advantage and that of the family. He fixed his eyes upon her with all the fervour of a question of life and death.

"Oh, I know that," cried little Duke. "Aunt Mary is Mar's mother; ain't she, mamma? But she says she never heard of him. She says she don't know him. And she's his own mother! I laughed till I thought I should have dropped. Fancy, mamma; Aunt Mary! And Mar laughed too," the boy said; but added in another moment in a subdued tone, "He was going to cry, but I made him laugh. He's a very little thing; he doesn't always see the fun."

Neither of his parents paid any attention to Duke, though they let him have his say. But John Parke, who had never taken his eyes from his wife's face, standing over her waiting for her decision on the question he had put before her, now touched her on the shoulder, recalling her to herself and what he had asked. "Eh?" he said interrogatively. "Letitia—don't you think——"

"No!" she said suddenly, when this little by-play had been twice repeated, "I don't. Nothing can be made of it. A child born in this house in everybody's knowledge; put in the papers—as public as if he had been a prince. No! Don't ask me what I think. There's nothing to be thought or said on the subject. She's mad; that is all."

"But they all say she is not mad—and she says she never had a child. She ought to know," said John. "Who should know if she doesn't? Letitia, when I think—if it hadn't been for her, you and I would have been coming home here; we should have had everything. And what if, after all, there's been some mistake, some delusion? Frogmore—poor old fellow, I wouldn't say a word against him; but he was prejudiced. If she says he adopted the boy—— Well! She ought to know——"

"Don't be a fool, John Parke," cried his wife. "Frogmore was proud of him, as you know. He hated me. He would never have married Mary Hill but to have his revenge on me. Do you think I didn't feel it, her set up in my place? And wouldn't I turn that brat to the door if I could, oh! without a moment's thought. But I'm not a fool," said Letitia. "The woman's mad—she doesn't know what she's saying. There's dozens of witnesses to prove it if she denies. The doctor and the nurse and all the servants in the house, and her mother, and



—we needn't go further—myself. John Parke, don't be a fool. You'll never get the better of her in that way."

"All the same," said John, who had recovered the first dismay caused by her contradiction while she went on speaking. "All the same, I think it's worth fighting—with the mother at your back."

"The mother!" she said, with contempt. "She'd go raving mad in the witness-box, and that would be fine proof for you. Why, the child was born before all the world, so to speak, like the heir to the Crown. You might as well fight the one as the other. Oh, it is not for any love of them, you may be sure, that I speak!"

"I don't understand you, Letitia," said John. "I'd fight it to the last, if it was any good; but as for turning the child out of doors or so forth, as you talk in your wild way——"

"You would leave me to do that," said Letitia, with a snarl, "and so I should, and never think twice either of him or his mother. Duke, what do you mean staring at me like that? You don't understand what we're talking about. Run away and play. Go to the nursery or wherever you live when you're here."

"Mamma, Mar's quite a little fellow; he doesn't know very much, but he's a very nice little fellow. If it is Mar you and papa are going to turn out of the house——"

Letitia burst into a shrill laugh. She pushed her boy away from her.

"Go off to your play, you little —— dunce," she said. "Mar! why, Mar's the master of the house, don't you know: he's Lord Frogmore. It's we that Mar will turn out of the house if we don't mind. You had better go and ask him to be kind to papa, and not send us away."

Father and son looked on with equally bewildered faces at this burst of merriment, which they could not understand.

"I am sure," said Duke, "that Mar would be very fond of papa if he'd let him, and never, never think of turning any one away. Mar is—why, Mar is—— Mamma! Mar's father's dead, and his mother has forgotten him, and he's a very, very little boy."

Duke's eyes filled with tears, his lips began to quiver; the thought of Mar's loneliness and a vague sense of unkindness and danger around him went to the child's heart. The effect of Duke's emotion on his two parents was very different. Letitia

gave her son a look of exasperation, as if she would have liked to strike him ; but John's countenance melted, and his hand unconsciously went over with a caress on the boy's shoulder. John's obtuse mind had taken what he heard *au pied de la lettre*, and the idea that "the little boy" might after all be an impostor, and his own rights intact, had inflamed his mind. But he had no unkindly feeling to little Mar, and the tears in Duke's eyes were not only a reproach to his father but melted at once the untimely, artificial frost in John's heart.

"God forgive me," he said ; "I didn't think of the poor child at all. I was thinking only—— Poor little boy! Duke, my fine fellow, you're right to stand up for him. You make me ashamed of myself. We'll do what we can to make it up to the poor little fellow, Duke!"

"Yes, father!" cried Duke, putting his hand into John's hand.

Letitia looked from one to the other more exasperated than ever. Her lip curled, in spite of herself, over her set teeth like the snarl of a dog. Had there been a thunderbolt handy and within her reach how unhesitatingly she would have aimed it at those two fools! "I think you'd better go and comfort your friend," she said. "Take care of him, Duke ; he may be a good friend to you another time, for you're nobody, don't you know, and he is Lord Frogmore. For goodness' ake, John, send the boy off and lock the door after him. I've got a hundred things to say."

John did as he was told, with the clouds closing over his face again. He had fired his shot, so to speak, and having failed had nothing more on his side to suggest.

"It is a little difficult," said Letitia, "to know where to have you, when one moment you are ready to take on trust a mad-woman's denial of a truth that is as well known as the Prince of Wales—and the next are shedding tears over the poor little boy."

"I don't see why one might not do both," said John.

"No ; consistency doesn't matter much, does it? But putting sentiment aside, I should like to know what's going to be done."

"I haven't heard much—how could I?" said John. "There's no will but one made before the child was born—leaving the mother guardian—of course, if she's mad, as you say, she can't be that now, I suppose."

"What does the doctor say?"

"The doctor says two or three things—as they all do—that she's quite well, not mad at all, though of course it has a strange appearance that she should have forgotten her child, and would go against her in a court of law. But he thinks it is quite natural, by all kinds of reasons," said John hurriedly, perceiving, as so few speakers are clever enough to do, that he no longer had the ear of his audience. He gave Letitia a look half affronted, half anxious, and then began to walk up and down the room, awaiting her reply.

"Five years old," said Letitia, "a little puny thing with no stamina, and the mother out of the question, taking no interest——"

"Poor little thing," said John.

"And after Mary—you are the guardian, I suppose."

"Letitia!" he cried. There was something in the tone with which she had said these words—something indescribable, hideous, which horrified him. He turned upon her with staring eyes.

"Well," she said calmly, "is there anything wonderful in that? I suppose you will be guardian as the next after her. He will be—in your hands——"

"Where he will be as safe," John cried, coming up to her almost as if he would have seized and shaken her, "as if he were my own."

"I never doubted it," Letitia said.

What did she mean? Her husband looking down upon her from where he stood could not accuse her of anything. The words had been simple enough. And she was now holding her foot to the fire, as if the only thing she cared for in the world was to get warm. She did not look at him. She yawned a little as if the conversation was getting tedious. "You see yourself," she went on, "that there's no use trying to unseat the boy because of his mother's wild fancies. The thing you have to think of is how to do the best for him. And you'll have to take this into consideration at once. I should say we'd better come here and let Greenpark. It will be best for the boy: and as I suppose you will have a great deal to do with the property it will be better for you. There is a long minority to look forward to, and of course there must be a good allowance for the child. It will be better for Mary that she should have the Dower House. The boy can't be any pleasure to her, feeling as she does, and it will be

good for him to have children about him instead of being brought up like a little old man."

"You seem to have got it all cut and dry," said John, astonished.

"Yes. I've been thinking about it," said Letitia. "You need not speak of it all cut and dry, as you call it, at once; but it's best to have a plan in our heads. That's what I advise. And as soon as the funeral is over the first thing to do is to get rid of Mary. I am very much frightened of mad people. I have always been so all my life."

"Well, perhaps it might be the best way. But there is Blotting to consult. Blotting has as much to say as I have. He's executor too. And so is she for that matter."

"John," said Mrs. Parke, "she is much better out of the house. And all those Hills. I can't bear them. If she keeps on thinking it an interloper, only adopted by Frogmore, she might do some harm to the child. It's not consistent with your duty to keep her here."

She looked up as she said this and met his eyes. There was a half smile in hers, but Mrs. Parke's eyes were not expressive—they were dull eyes, and when Letitia chose they became duller still with no meaning in them at all. Perhaps she had not any meaning. The tone which frightened her husband might have been an accidental change of her voice. He looked at her with all the penetration there was in his, but could make nothing of her. John had been very much frightened, he could not tell how; for, as a matter-of-fact, it was he who had entertained ideas prejudicial to little Mar, and not Letitia. What dreadful thing had he imagined about his wife? "You are the guardian." There could not be simpler words. Was it some suggestion from the devil that had made him hear in them something—that was too dreadful to be spoken? John Parke, who was honest enough, and could not have harmed any one, though he would have fought tooth and nail for his rights, looked into his wife's face, and saw nothing there that gave any solution to what he had imagined. But after the shock he had received it was not very easy for him to continue the conversation. He said, "I beg your pardon," thrusting one of his hands into his pockets, as if to find the solution of the mystery there. Letitia did not ask why he begged her pardon. She begged him to call Felicie that she might get a cup of tea.

## CHAPTER XXIX.

IT was said by everybody that nothing could be more pathetic than Lord Frogmore's funeral. When a man dies over seventy he is usually attended to his grave, if he has been a good man, by much respect and reverential seriousness, but not by any acute feelings : but there was something in the aspect of the little boy whom John Parke led by the hand after the old man's coffin which went to the hearts of the bystanders. Poor little boy ! an interloper if ever there was one, a being unnecessary, who never ought to have been. It is needless to say that this was not the popular sentiment. The village folks gaped after the little lord with a partiality and sympathy partly made up of compassion for him, and partly of admiration for his great good fortune. A little thing like that ! and already a great lord. People of another class, however, entertained different feelings. The man of business, who was his other guardian, looked at little Mar with a troubled pity that had a little impatience in it. Poor little man ! Why on earth had he ever been born ? Nobody wanted him. He stood horribly in the way of John Parke and all his sturdy children. It was not at all surprising if John felt it so, and certainly Mrs. John did. There could be no doubt on that subject. They had married on the strength of that inheritance, which nobody ever doubted, and he had been his brother's heir presumptive all his life. Who wanted this little thing ? If even his mother had been fond of him, had taken some pride in him ! But she threw him off altogether. The poor little forlorn creature with his little pale face ! He was in everybody's way. But for him John Parke would have come tranquilly into his kingdom, the inheritance which he had expected all his life, which had been his right. There was scarcely anybody, Mr. Blotting thought, who would not be glad if the child were removed to a better world. "If the Lord would take him," that was what poor people said of their superfluous children. The lawyer could not but think, with a feeling not so pious, that this would really be the best way. The event would break his aunt's heart, perhaps ; but what does it matter if a middle-aged unmarried woman, an old maid, should chance to break her heart ? And to everybody else it would be a relief. "They'll never 'rare' him," was what the village gossips said. Mr. Blotting had not the slightest doubt that Mrs. John Parke would

do the best she possibly could to "rare" Mar, though it would be much against her interest. But what a saving of trouble, what a clearing up of difficulties, if only the Lord would take him. Poor unnecessary child! the old man's plaything, now nothing but a trouble and hindrance, what to him were all the good things to which he had been born? Nobody wanted him to be born, not even his mother, it appeared; and the best thing for him would be to slip away out of life and be heard of no more.

Mar had a very white serious little face, and watched every detail of the funeral service with a strange earnestness. He clutched fast hold of his uncle's hand as he stood gazing, wondering, not knowing what it was all about. To associate the ominous blackness of that coffin, which was the central object in the dismal scene, with his old kind father, was beyond Mar's powers. He took a great interest in it, how it was to be got down into the hole, and even stepped forward eagerly, dragging John a step or two to see how it was done, which gave some of the bystanders the idea that the poor little precocious lad was about to throw himself into the grave of his father, and made several take a hasty step towards him to rescue the child. Poor little thing—and not such a bad business either if it could be done—if the Lord would take him. The village people, too, thought it would be a great thing if the Lord would take him. He never would be reared, they were sure; and what with his mother, poor lady, who was mad, and his father, who was dead, there was little prospect of any comfort or petting, such as his forlorn orphanhood required, for poor little Mar.

Mary went to the church, though it was considered by Mrs. Hill that it was more decorous that she should not be able to follow the mournful little procession to the grave, and it was not practicable to shut her out afterwards from the assembly of the mourners, before whom the will was read. She came in, looking perhaps better than she had ever looked in her life before, in the imposing black and white of her widow's weeds—that dress which it is so common to decry as hideous, but which is almost always advantageous to its wearer. She was pale and grave, but had that air of soft exhaustion and almost repose which so often follows a grief which is natural, but not impassioned or excessive. The tears came easily to her eyes, her lips occasionally trembled, and her voice broke; but she was quite composed and quiet, guilty of



no exaggeration or extravagance of mourning. She came in with her own party surrounding and supporting her—the vicar first of the group, the doctor bringing up the rear with the apologetic air of a man who knows he is not wanted, yet is conscious of a certain right to come. The two factions, so to speak, kept instinctively on different sides of the room, and the vicar and John Parke had a momentary silent struggle for the commanding position in front of the fire which both aimed at. When the one saw the intention of the other he involuntarily hesitated and fell back a step, so that there was first a mutual withdrawal from the coveted place; and then it came simultaneously into the minds of both that to give up this advantage out of mere politeness was unnecessary in the position in which they now stood to each other, so that both began to advance again, as if by a word of command. But if John Parke was more nimble, being younger, the vicar carried more weight, and with a sweep of his large shoulder pushed on, before the other's attitude was secure. The result was, therefore, to the advantage of the vicar in this brief preliminary encounter. Mrs. John had placed herself in a comfortable chair near the fire, with her handkerchief and smelling-bottle ready. Mary was more in the open, so to speak, with her mother seated near; Agnes standing by her chair, and the doctor behind. There was little remark as Mr. Blotting read and expounded the will, to which, indeed, no one paid very much attention. They were all tolerably acquainted with its scope and conditions before.

"The chief point to be settled," said the man of business, "as circumstances may make certain of the late lord's stipulations impossible, is the future custody and care of poor little Lord Frogmore. I think it may all be managed amicably among us, which would be so much better than any public interference with what the testator wished. I feel sure he would prefer that we should carry out the spirit of his instructions in good intelligence among ourselves."

"Mr. Blotting," said Lady Frogmore, "may I be allowed to speak?"

She was the only one to whom the will had been at all new, and she had received it with little gestures of assent and nods of her head.

"Surely, Lady Frogmore, whatever you may wish to say."

"It is just this," said Mary. "I agree in all my dear lord says

If there had been—a child—— These things," she said, with an old-maidenly blush dyeing her countenance for a moment, "have always, I believe, to be taken into consideration ; but there was, you see, no child——"

"Not when the will was written : but a prospect of one, Lady Frogmore."

"People don't make settlements upon prospects," said Mary with a gleam of shrewdness. "Do you think he would have left it like that if it had come to anything? My dear lord was far more careful of my comfort than that. It is clearly understood, then, that there was no child?"

"Not then," said Mr. Blotting.

"Not then," said Mary, "nor ever. Why, what time was there?"

The lawyer read out the date, "Nearly six years ago."

She had been unmoved by the figures, but started slightly at this.

"Six years! We have not been married—half that time——"

"Oh, yes, my dear Mary," said Mrs. Hill ; "going on for seven years. You see you have been so long away, such a long time away—more than five years."

"My dear," said the vicar, "never mind about dates. Mary must be kept quite calm——"

She glanced round, with a wondering, troubled look.

"Five years! Why!" She burst into a little laugh. "I to be away from my dear old lord for five years! Mother, you must be dreaming. But let us return to the other subject. I have a statement to make, which is very serious. I think I have a right to be heard, for no one can know as well as me. I have always been disturbed ever since I was married by the thought of any harm that might happen to Letitia and her family through me. You all know that. Well! Please let everybody listen to me ; it is very, very important. My great comfort in my dear lord's death is this—that everything of that kind has been mercifully averted. You may think me very calm, seeing how much I have lost. Oh, no one can tell what I have lost—the kindest, the dearest! He was old, but that only made us suit each other the better—for you know I was not young. But my comfort in it all is this—that no harm has been done. I don't understand your talk about a child. John Parke, my husband's brother, is of course Lord Frogmore ; and Letitia is Lady Frogmore ; and I am the Dowager : that is all as plain as daylight. And," said Mary,

rising, her eyes full of tears, her gesture full of dignity, "if they think I grudge it they are very, very wrong. I wish them a happy life and long, long years to bear their new name; and my own comfort in losing my dear lord is that no harm has been done to them."

She made this long speech with the air of a queen giving up her throne, and, with a smile through her tears, turned away, taking her sister's arm, who stood crying silently, not saying a word. The doctor hastened forward from behind to offer his support, but Mary put him away. "No, thank you, doctor," she said; "I am quite well. I want no help." She turned to the audience, who were silent, struck dumb, not venturing even to look at each other in the awe of the strange communication she had made them. "I need not stay longer?" she said. "No, I could not help to settle anything; but whatever you arrange I will do." It was John Parke who hurried forward to open the door for her. He took her hand as she passed him and gave it a close grasp. He was strangely disturbed, and moved, in a way Mary was very far from understanding. "Lady Frogmore," he said, "whether you know it or not, and however hard it may be, I'll do my duty all the same." "I never doubted it," she said; "you were always kind; and God bless you, Lord Frogmore." John fell back as if he had received a blow. He went back slowly to the rest, who were all silent, not even Letitia finding courage enough to make any remark. John looked at the vicar again as if he would have liked to oust him from his place; but finally, finding that too much to undertake, flung himself down into a low but very comfortable chair by the fire. "Well," he said, looking round, "here is just as strange a business as ever I met with. Blotting, what do you think?"

His voice broke the spell which had lain upon them all.

"I don't see what there is to think," said Letitia. "What did you expect? Sense from a woman who is as mad as a March hare?"

"It ill becomes you, Tisch," said Mrs. Hill, who had been gasping for an opportunity, "it ill becomes you, who drove her to it, to speak of my Mary in that way."

Mrs. John Parke gave a stare in the direction of the vicar's wife, and then, turning to the two gentlemen, shrugged her shoulders a little and elevated her eyebrows.

"It is in the family," she said.

Mr. Blotting, like most other men, feared a passage of arms between the two ladies, so he hastened to put himself in the breach.

"In ordinary circumstances," he said, "a statement of this kind from a mother would be considered conclusive. If she said, 'This child is not mine,' there would not be another word to say."

"But, I beg—I beg," said the vicar, wagging his white beard, and see-sawing with his large hand. "Nothing of the sort—nothing of the sort! Lady Frogmore entertains a hallucination. Such a thing has happened to many at a delicate time of life. Where is Dr. Brown? he will tell you. Why, the boy, sir, the boy—is undoubtedly—— Why, my wife was there!"

"I am ready," said Mrs. Hill, "to be examined before any court in England. I was present from the moment things began. Her mother! Of course, I was with her—I never left her. Why, it was I who received the child—I saw him born. I——"

"Spare us, please, the details. These gentlemen are not old women," said Letitia. "We, who are most concerned, don't question the fact. We may have our own opinion; we may think that of all the base, foul designs—to marry an old doting fool of a——"

"Letitia!" said John, springing up (which was no small effort) from his low chair.

"And if she went wrong in her head," cried Mrs. Hill, with gleaming eyes, "who drove her to it? Oh, how dare you speak, you bad woman! You tried it first at home at Grocombe to drive her off the marriage—and then the day, the very day before the child was born. Oh, perhaps, you don't think I remember—but I remember everything, everything! The very day, Mrs. Parke—the afternoon, and little Mar was born in the middle of the night, the same day, so to speak. She came pretending to see how Mary was—and, oh, what she did or what she said I can't tell; but my Mary never held up her head again. It is all her doing, all! I am ready to swear—before any court——"

"Ladies, ladies!" said Mr. Blotting. "When you begin to quarrel there's nothing can be done. Of course, you blame each other. It's always so—but what good does it do? Lady Frogmore is quite well now, my dear madam—you must be thankful for it—except this hallucination."

"Which is a hallucineth—whatever you call it," cried the angry mother. "Though in one way it's the truth, poor lamb—for she never saw him, never looked at him, never knew she had a child. She was driven frantic before ever he was born, and that woman did it, and meant to do it, and came on purpose. She hoped to have killed the child—that is what she wanted—before he was born."

"Letitia!" cried John Parke again, looking at her with a white threatening face which cowed her spirit, though she despised him.

"Oh, if you choose to believe what they say." It was good for Mrs. John that she was cowed and sitting motionless in the chair, which seemed to give her a sort of support and shelter, and an air of composure and self-command in which in reality for the moment she had failed. She was afraid of John, her docile husband, for the first time in her life; and she was afraid of this accusation, which she knew to be true.

"We did not wish to say anything about it," said the vicar, wagging his head. "I would not have it mentioned, being a member of the family; but that is the truth about Lady Frogmore."

"Come, come," said Mr. Blotting, "in families there are always these mutual recriminations. I say it's your fault, and you say it's mine. Come, come! don't you think this has gone too far? Madness is a visitation of God. I don't ask if it's in the family; but a person must be much off their balance, my dear lady, that can be upset altogether by an angry visitor. We can't entertain that, you know! Come! what we have got to decide is what's to be done about this poor little boy."

Poor little Mar! If the Lord would take him. That would be so much the best solution of the question.

### CHAPTER XXX.

AGNES HILL had given herself entirely up to her sister in these latter days. There had been nothing at all remarkable about Miss Hill in the former portion of her life. She had never been so attractive as Mary, or so sweet: a good clergyman's daughter—very thoroughly acquainted with the needs of the parish, and ready at any moment to respond to the call of those who were in need—but no more. However, in her later development many

new faculties had appeared in Agnes. She had become a mother to little Mar; a mother with all the devotion of maternity, but with something of the reason of the unmarried woman, whose instinct it is to keep in the background and not to show her feelings. She was, indeed, all the mother little Mar had ever known, but she made no claim upon the first of his affections, always directing them, indeed, towards his adoring father, suppressing herself entirely in favour of Lord Frogmore as the most self-denying of mothers could not have done. And since Mary arrived, and the horror of the discovery that Mary, though sane, was unconscious of the great event of her life—the birth of her child—had burst upon the family, Agnes had devoted herself entirely to her sister. She had, perhaps, as most people have, a secret conviction that her own exertions might bring about that in which no one else had succeeded—that she would surely be able to seize the right moment to bring forgotten circumstances to Mary's mind, to convince her of that in which it was so strange to think she could require conviction—in the reality of her child's existence. Agnes had been accordingly her sister's anxious companion during these days; but she had as yet made no attempt to move her. She had quieted as much as she could Mrs. Hill's indiscreet remonstrances. She had watched over Mary's tranquillity and peace, saving her from every disturbance. But when she led Lady Frogmore away from that assemblage of the family, it appeared to Agnes that her time had now come. An hour or two passed, during which Mary was soothed and comforted in a natural paroxysm of grief by her anxious sister. But in the evening she was better, composed and ready to talk. The nurse, of whom Agnes felt no need, was sent away. Mrs. Hill had been persuaded that she was over-fatigued and had much better go to bed early after the great strain of the day. The vicar, on the other hand, had been recalled to the necessity of looking over his sermon, as he had to return to his parish before the next Sunday. Thus the two sisters were left alone. "You will make Mary go to bed," was Mrs. Hill's last charge. "Oh, yes, I will make her go to bed," said Agnes—but in reality her mind was full of other things.

"There is one thing," said Lady Frogmore, "that we must settle soon, and that is where we are to live. It is wonderful how little familiar it feels to me here. Now that my dear lord is



gone I don't seem as if I know this place. He was all that made it feel like home."

"It is not wonderful you should think so," said Agnes, "you have been so little here."

"Only all the time I have been married," said Mary, with a faint, uneasy smile.

"No, my dear, only a year and a half at first. It is five years and more since you were taken away."

"I don't know what you mean," said Mary; "but I am not able to argue, and you are all in a story, as if you wanted to make me believe— You think I will feel it so much—I know that is your motive. You think that to give up my house and be only the Dowager, while Letitia is here—"

"Mary, you must try to open your eyes to the real state of affairs: why shouldn't you stay here—with your boy? He ought to be brought up in his own house."

"Agnes, will you torment me too? Did Frogmore say that? Did he want me to pretend—oh, no! no! My dear old lord would never have done so—for he was true, as true as steel."

"My poor dear, it is you who are not true—you have been so ill, Mary—you have been away for a long, long time. You were driven into it at the time you were so weak, just before the baby was born. Try and throw back your mind, oh, Mary, dear. Don't you recollect when the baby was coming? When we were all so happy, dear Frogmore the most of all. Mary, think! when the baby was coming——"

Mary's pale face flushed. She shook her head. "I never wished it," she said. "Oh no, I never wished it—to ruin little Duke and do Letitia all that harm."

"Letitia! who did her best to kill you—who came when you were weak, and reproached you, and said—horrible things. Mary, Mary, rouse yourself! Do not let her succeed in her bad, bad intent. She hoped the baby would die. And almost as well if he had, poor child," cried Agnes, in the petulance of her misery, "when his mother disowns him. His father is dead, and his mother has forgotten him. Oh, poor child, poor child."

This did not move Mary as she had hoped. She said sadly, "Yes, I know; Letitia was not very kind. But it was not wonderful. If I had been the means of keeping her husband and her children out of the title—out of their inheritance. Would you

have taken it better, Agnes? I should not—if I had had children——”

Her voice shook a little. “I do remember a time when I suppose there were hopes—and I felt very happy for a moment—and dear Frogmore——”

“Yes,” said Agnes anxiously.

“But it all went off. I have been thinking of that all the time, while you have been saying such strange things. I fainted or something, and there was an end of it. I think I was sorry after, but I’m glad now not to have done any harm to Letitia and her boy.”

“Oh, Mary! if you were to see your own boy, your own boy! and hear him call you mother, don’t you think that would bring things back to your mind?”

“If I had a boy, Agnes,” said Lady Frogmore, with a faint, half-reproachful smile, “I should not want that; but you know I never had a child.”

“Oh, my dear, my dear,” cried Agnes, wringing her hands.

“You may be sorry, but that doesn’t make any difference. If we could change things by being sorry——! Not that I am sorry,” said Lady Frogmore; “my only comfort is that my marriage and all that, which she disliked so, has done Letitia no harm.”

“She disliked it very much. Oh, that is far too gentle a way of putting it: she said dreadful things to you, Mary.”

“Did she? Don’t make me think of them. I am quite in charity with her now. Poor Letitia, she needn’t look reproachful any longer. She has got all she wanted now.”

“Mary,” said Agnes, “you are mistaken. It is your little boy that is Lord Frogmore.”

“Tut, tut,” said Mary, with an impatient movement of her hands, “you go on like that only to worry me. Of course, I should always be kind to him if my dear lord adopted him. But adoption won’t go so far as that. No, no. I am tired of hearing of this child. Let’s speak of him no more.”

“Mary, if it were to be proved to you—by eye-witness—that he was your child?”

“Proved to me!” cried Lady Frogmore. “Should not I myself be the chief witness?”

Her smile was so perfectly satisfied in its faint indulgent com-

passion for her sister's folly, and the look of uneasiness with which she turned from this perpetual repetition of a disagreeable subject was so natural, that Agnes's heart sank. "I think I must go to bed," she added. "It has been a hard day, and even though one does not sleep, lying down is always a rest."

"Shall I read to you, Mary, till you go to sleep?"

"No, my dear. Go to sleep yourself, Agnes. We shall both be better quiet. It will be another life to-morrow," said Mary, dismissing her sister with a kiss. Poor Agnes went away with a heart almost too sick and sad for thought. She had failed more miserably than the rest. And she did not know now what to say or do, or whether it was best to make no further attempt—to leave everything to the action of time and the guidance of events. It is more easy to adopt the most laborious or heroic measures than to take up this passive plan of operation, and it cost Agnes a great deal to relinquish the effort to set her sister right. Would she ever learn what was right? Would she ever come to a true knowledge of what had passed? or if she did would the discovery be accompanied by a convulsion which would again rend their life in pieces? That possibility must always be taken into consideration. At present Mary was perfectly sane, and as composed in her gentle thoughts as any one could be. But if she were urged beyond measure; if this great fact which she ignored were to be rudely pressed upon her, what might happen? Her recovery was still new, her mind fresh fledged, so to speak; too feeble to take many flights. But how to be patient and bear with this Agnes did not know. Those who have to deal with a persistent delusion have need for double patience. It is so difficult not to think that there is perversity in it, or that the deceived person could not understand if they would. Agnes went up to the nursery and bent over Mar's little crib, and dropped a kiss upon his forehead as soft as the touch of any mother. The child opened his eyes without anything of the startled effect of sudden waking, as if he had only shut his eyes in play. "Why do you say 'poor child'?" he asked in his little soft voice. "Oh, my little Mar, my little Mar!" cried Agnes, and then she scolded him a little for being awake, and bade him shut those big eyes directly and go to sleep. This visit did not dry her tears or make it more easy to think what she was to do. Indeed Agnes was less and less reconciled to the idea of submitting to Mary's delusion as she

thought it over. It would all have been so very easy otherwise! They might have lived, the two together, mother and aunt, in the familiar house of which she had grown so fond during these five years, taking care of the little heir until he was old enough to go to school. His mother was his natural guardian, and so she would have been had it not been for this. It would almost have been better, Agnes thought with bitterness, if she had not recovered at all—if she had still remained with Dr. Brown. For who could tell what the Parkes might do? They would have the power in their hands. They might insist on having her removed again. They might say that still she was not sane, and to prove that a woman was sane who had forgotten the very existence of her child, how difficult would that be. Agnes was the only one in the great house who could not sleep that night. She was sorry, very sorry, too, for the loss of old Frogmore. He had been to her a kind companion, a confiding and respectful brother, and she missed him—more than any one else who mourned for him. The thought that he was gone and taken away, and that now there would be a clearing out of all his drawers, a searching into all his secrets, his papers examined, his very wardrobe turned inside out, brought tears of sorrow, mingled with a sort of angry dismay, to her eyes. That, too, if Mary had but been well, would have been spared. She would have kept the old man's house sacred. Sorrow and contrariety and care, all the exasperating and irritating elements which make a position intolerable, mingled in the mind of Agnes; and she knew that she could not throw it off as intolerable, but must somehow support everything for the sake of Mary and of the poor little boy. Poor little boy! To think that he was Lord Frogmore, and that after his long minority was over he would be one of the wealthiest peers in England, the poor, little, forlorn child for whom nobody cared, was enough to make any kind woman's heart overflow with piteousness of the contrast: and he was dear and precious to Agnes as the apple of her eye.

That day she had him carefully dressed, and led him with her to Mary to make one last attempt. She had taught him with the tenderest exactitude what he was to say. It was not very much, only, "Mamma, speak to Mar. Dear mamma, speak to father's little boy." Mar said it very prettily after Agnes. His great eyes, which were so large and so sad, looked wistfully into the

very heart of the woman who loved him. "Speak to father's little boy." She cried herself when she heard him, and did not think that any heart could resist it. She led him into Mary's room, holding his little hand very fast to give him courage, and brought him to the side of the bed where Lady Frogmore was lying, very patient and quiet, with tears in her eyes, but a faint smile upon her patient mouth. "Mary," said Agnes, "I have brought your little Mar to see you. Your own little boy. You have never given him a kiss, not since he was a baby in the cradle." She led him to his mother's side, and pulled his arm to remind him of what he had to say. But Mar had forgot, or else he was too much overawed by the sight of this strange lady who was his mother. He gazed at her with his big melancholy eyes, but he could not find a word to say. Mary did not turn her head away. She looked at him not without a little emotion. "Is this the little boy," she said, "that my dear old lord was fond of? That should always give him a claim upon me."

"Oh, he has a claim. He has a first claim," cried Agnes, "on his own account."

Mary did not risk any reply, but she put her hand upon his head and smoothed his hair, and said, "Poor little boy."

And Mar did not say a word. Not though Agnes pulled his sleeve, and touched his elbow, and did everything that was possible to jog his memory. "Mar!" she said in an emphatic and significant whisper. But not a syllable did Mar say, not even "Mamma," which would have been so natural. He only stood and gazed with those large eyes that looked doubly large in his small pale face—till there remained nothing for Agnes to do but to take him away again and to acknowledge to herself that she had failed. "Oh, Mar, Mar!" she cried, when she had taken him back to his nursery, "why didn't you speak? Why didn't you say what I told you?" But even then Mar had not found his tongue, and he made her no reply.

After this there ensued a strange confused interval, during which the two executors were continually meeting to consult on what was to be done. They had no right to consult without including the third, most important of all, in their deliberations. But how were they to consult with Lady Frogmore, who ignored the very first particular of their trust? Nothing could be more strange than the position altogether. The vicar and his wife, who would

not be shut out, and whose importance as her parents was so very much greater than any claimed by Mary, fought stoutly for what they considered their daughter's "rights." But Mary put in no claim of right, and was only anxious that John Parke and his wife should, as she thought, succeed to everything and take their right place. She did not ask either the custody or guardianship of the child. He had a disturbing influence upon her, confident though she was that he was none of hers, and after a while she showed a restlessness to get away, to which the doctor, who was still always in attendance, would not allow any opposition. He would not answer for the consequence, he said, if she were opposed. And thus it happened that, to the extreme discomfiture and dismay of the vicar and his wife, and the despair of Agnes, the matter was settled at last. Mary left the Park, leaving behind almost with relief the forlorn little Lord Frogmore, who was her only child. She left him in the keeping of the woman who tried her best to extinguish his little life before it began, carrying away from him in her train the only creature in the world that had been to him as a mother. Alas for little Mar! But so it had to be.

#### CHAPTER XXXI.

LITTLE Mar said nothing at any time about this shock to his being, which occurred when he was so very young, that his after recollection of it was of the most imperfect kind, a confused memory of pain rather than any definite recollection of facts. But there was no doubt that it had a very serious effect upon him. Such a change—from the supremacy of an only child, monarch of all he surveyed, the idol of his old father and of his aunt, to whom Mar was everything, into a mere indefinite member of a large nursery party, nobody's favourite, a little stranger whose tastes were not consulted, nor his fancies thought of—is more tremendous than anything that can happen to a man. How good for him, people said, instead of being petted and spoiled as an only child is so apt to be, to have the advantage of a wholesome nursery life with other children round him, and all the natural give and take of a large family. But such a revolution is a terrible experiment. I have known it drive a delicate child into a sort of temporary imbecility. This could not be said of Mar, for amid all the criticisms to which he was subject it was never



alleged of him that he was without intelligence. But a great many other things were said, which, whether they were true or not, had a great effect upon his after career.

For one thing, Mrs. John Parke intimated to all her friends with great regret that the little lord was exceedingly delicate, which was a thing not to be wondered at considering the age of his parents, the unfortunate tendency to nervous and mental disease in his mother's family, and the extremely injudicious way in which he had been brought up until the time when he came under her care. He was so delicate that when Mar reached the age at which other boys go to school, his aunt did not feel that she could take the responsibility of permitting him to go. She said it was his uncle who was afraid to take this step, but most people knew that Mrs. John Parke had the reigning will in the house. The situation altogether was one which the outer world did not very well understand. Lady Frogmore lived at the Dower House, which was quite on the other side of the county, and very difficult to get at from the Park, being out of the way of railways, and requiring a very long and roundabout journey by various junctions. She was well enough to see her friends, to take a little mild share in what was going on, but her son was never with her. It was vaguely rumoured that she had taken an aversion to him during the time of the insanity, from which, as a matter of fact, most people were doubtful if she had ever recovered, while many continued to regard her with a little alarm, her sister-in-law being the chief of these. Mrs. John Parke never hesitated to express this feeling with lamentations over her own weakness. "Poor Mary," she said, "is quite well now: I know she is quite well—just as clear in her head as any of us, except that unfortunate delusion about the boy. I know it is very bad of me, but one can't help one's nature; and I cannot get over it. She always frightens me—I keep thinking perhaps something may be said that will set her off—or something happen—I know I am very wrong; but I have such a horror of mad people. Oh, yes, I know she is quite well *now*, but when that is in your nature how can one ever be sure?" Most people sympathized with Mrs. John, who betrayed to her intimates with bated breath the state of affairs between Mary and her child. "Greenpark was in many ways more convenient to us," she said; "but what could we do? We could not abandon the poor child. John was his natural

guardian, and of course we all felt that wholesome quiet family life, when he would simply be one of many, was the best thing for him—the only thing to neutralize all those other dreadful influences. He is always called by his Christian name, not Frogmore, as would naturally be the case, for the same reason. It is so much better, with such an excitable feeble child, not to surround him with any sort of special distinction—time enough for that when he is a man.”

“If he ever lives to be a man,” Mrs. Parke’s confidants would say, shaking their heads.

“Oh, for heaven’s sake don’t say such a dreadful thing. What should I do if he did not live to be a man? I think I should kill myself. We his next heirs, and acting as father and mother to him—Oh, no, no. If I did not believe that under all his delicacy he had a tough wiry constitution, I should never have consented to take such a charge.”

But notwithstanding the tough wiry constitution in which she believed, Mrs. Parke was too anxious about her nephew to allow him to go to school. It was too exciting for him, it was too exhausting for him. With the germs, perhaps, who could tell, of madness in him, it was altogether too dangerous. And Mar accordingly grew up at home under the charge of successive tutors, who rarely managed to please Mrs. Parke or to please themselves under her roof for long together. Either they had theories as to what was good for their pupil which did not agree with hers, or they found the life so deadly dull which they were expected to spend with Mar in seclusion, shut out from everything that might be going on, that it soon became insufferable to them. They formed quite a procession coming and going, one following the other, and as each man had, more or less, a different system, it may be supposed that poor little Mar’s education did not advance in any remarkable way. What they all agreed in was a desire to get the boy into the open air, to give him the advantage of a country life, to make him hardy and active. But to this Mrs. Parke maintained a constant opposition. He was not strong enough, she said; his lungs were delicate; he would not bear the exposure and exercise which were good for the others. In summer she was obliged to relax her rules, but in winter she was obdurate, with the natural consequence that Mar caught cold more readily than any one else in the house.

This was the position of affairs when Duke, John Parke's eldest son, came of age. Duke's majority was celebrated as if indeed it was he who was the heir. The family had by this time been so long established in the chief house of the race that they were scarcely conscious that it was not theirs by full right of possession. Letty, the eldest girl, was nineteen; she was not quite three years older than Mar, and his champion and supporter in the family. There were two boys younger than she, and a little girl who brought up the rear—all of whom were stronger, noisier, and more assuredly at home, masters and mistresses of the position, than the quiet, slim, pale boy, too long, too slight, too grave for his years, who had the habit of being pushed into the background, and never asserted himself, or took any distinctive place in the family party. The younger ones, indeed, were all contemptuous of Mar. His delicacy, of which so much was made, his perpetual staying at home, his supposed incapacity for their sports and indifference to their pleasures, had been part of their code all their life. There were so many things that Mar could not do. "Oh, he can't come. He'll catch cold," Reginald, who was sixteen, said scornfully when there was any question of Mar sharing their pleasures. The members of the family who stood by Mar were the two eldest and little Mary, the youngest girl, whom her mother called Tiny, in order not to use poor Lady Frogmore's name, which John had insisted upon giving her—who made a slave of the quiet boy and found him very serviceable. The girls made Mar's life a little brighter than it would otherwise have been, and Duke when he was at home, which was not very often, was always good to his old playfellow, who looked up to him as a youth of sixteen does to one of twenty-one, with admiration and devotion. And thus the time drew on to Duke's majority. The preparations for it caused a little scandal in the neighbourhood. The good people about protested to each other that it was for all the world as if John Parke's son was the heir, but they accepted with alacrity all the same the invitations which Letitia sent forth in so liberal a way. There was to be a dinner of the farmers, who had known Master Duke all his life. There was to be a great ball to which all the county was invited, and there was a *fête* in the park for the village folk and all the poor neighbours, and also for the "smart" people whose revels were of a less noisy kind. It is so much the fashion nowadays to put the poor neigh-

bours in the foreground that this *fête* was Letitia's *chef d'œuvre*. The programme altogether was one by which she felt she was to distinguish herself in the county, and which would mark Duke's birthday as nothing else could do. Mrs. Parke, indeed, spoke of her son exactly as if he were the heir. She spoke of her humble guests as having seen him grow up, and taking *such* an interest in him. All the connections of the family were collected to celebrate this great event, and what was the most extraordinary of all, Lady Frogmore, who went out so little, and to whom this was in some sort a hostile demonstration, was one of the guests. There was nothing in the whole programme about which the county neighbours, the spectators who watched and criticized Letitia, were so much interested as the demeanour of Lady Frogmore. She had not appeared among them for years; her story was full of mystery; she was said to be indifferent to, if not possessed by an aversion for, her own son, her only child, who lived neglected in his uncle's family. All these things gave excitement to the reappearance of the poor lady, whose pleasant ways so many remembered with kindness, and whose life had been so strangely and so terribly overcast.

By this time the Vicar of Grocombe and his wife were both dead. That Mary had been a dreadful disappointment to them, and that they had not at all approved of her conduct at the time of Lord Frogmore's death, they had not hesitated to say, and Mrs. Hill had indeed been heard to declare that it gave her husband his death-blow. He had been so much disappointed in Mary! He had felt it such a dereliction of duty on her part to leave her son in the hands of the Parkes, people about whose religious principles there was no certainty, and it had helped him to his grave to think of little Mar being brought up perhaps in the most careless way, while his grandfather was a clergyman. Whether it was this mental trouble or bronchitis that removed the vicar at the ripe age of seventy-five, it is at all events certain that he did succumb, and that his wife did not long survive him. When the new vicar was appointed Mrs. Hill came to her daughters at the Dower House, but she never was happy there. She kept asking daily why was Mary there and not at the Park? Why had she abandoned her child?—it was nonsense to say that she had forgotten her child! Why, why had she left Mar? Which indeed were very reasonable questions, but did not pro-

mote the happiness of the house. After her death the two sisters continued as before each other's closest companion, and now with no divided duty, save that Mary was very tranquil in her secluded life, and that Agnes's heart was racked with anxiety. She kept up a little correspondence with Mar, exchanging letters full of love and longing for his schoolboy epistles, in which there was not even the animation of a schoolboy, which poor Agnes looked for with the wildest anxiety, and cried over with the deepest disappointment when they came. How should he be able to respond—that undeveloped, heart-stunned boy—to her tenderness, the tenderness of an old mother, not even young to gain his sympathy? Agnes was the one who suffered amid all these different interests and feelings. Now and then, at long intervals, she had a glimpse of her boy, a privilege which generally left her sadder than ever. "He looks so delicate," she was even forced to allow to Letitia, who surprised her in tears after she had taken farewell of the boy. "Yes, he is very delicate," said Letitia with a grave face. "I take a hundred precautions with him which I should laugh at for my own children. But if anything were to happen to Mar in my house I should die." "Oh, God forbid that anything should happen!" cried poor Agnes. "I am sure I hope so sincerely," cried Letitia, but still shaking her head. And the same impression was universal. The old women in the village whom Agnes went to see on her visit, old pensioners, shook their heads too, and said, "Ma'am, you'll never rare him." And the tutor who was leaving seized upon the owner of the sympathetic face and discoursed to her largely of the false system on which Mar was being trained. "He's like a flower growing in a prison—that flower, you know, that some man wrote a book about, all running to seed, and not a bit of colour for want of air and sun."

"Oh, if it was only air and sun that were wanted," cried Agnes.

"It is, it is!" said the young man. "I hear his mother's living; why don't she send and take him away? To be with you, now, who would pet him and study him, would make all the difference in the world."

"Oh, don't say so," said Agnes with tears, "for it cannot be; I fear it cannot be."

"Well," said the young man, "I would not leave the boy here

if I had anything to do with him : but then perhaps I'm prejudiced, for I hate—Mrs. Parke." He was going to say "the woman here," but paused in time.

"You must not speak so," said Agnes.

"No, I suppose I ought to keep it to myself," said the tutor. She said to herself afterwards that no doubt it was because he was going to leave, because he had been dismissed. People said you must never trust discharged servants. To be sure he was not a servant, he was a gentleman ; but still—Agnes tried a little to comfort herself in this way ; but Mrs. Parke's pious hope that nothing might happen and the tutor's bold criticisms rankled in her mind. It was she that decided Lady Frogmore to accept the invitation to all the rejoicings over Duke's majority, though it was not Agnes but Mary that was fond of Duke. "It is right that you should show yourself," she said to her sister. Mary did not perceive what good showing herself would do, and feared the great dinner and the return to a place which had so many sad associations (she said). But Agnes pressed so much that her sister, always gentle and so seldom asserting her own will against any one else's, at last consented. A visit to the Park was a great step. It was always on the cards that something might awaken smouldering recollections, or throw a new light upon that mystery of the past. At all events, it was with the stirrings of a new hope that Agnes, who managed everything, got her sister afloat on the day before Duke's birthday, and steered her by the many junctions through half-a-dozen different trains across country to the Park. It was a troublesome journey, and took the greater part of the day, what with the difficulty of connecting trains and long waiting at various stations. These delays and waitings were, however, rather good for Mary, who began to be roused out of her usual quiescence, and to ask questions about when they would arrive, and what company they would be likely to find there. "Duke was always my boy," poor Mary said. A little cloud passed over her face as she spoke, as though a consciousness of something that had interfered between Duke and her had floated across her thoughts. Agnes did not burst out as she would have liked to do into a blast of sentiment in respect to Duke, which was perfectly uncalled for. But she looked disappointed though she did not say it.

*(To be continued.)*



## A Holiday Trip to Lucerne.

### PART I.

LUDGATE HILL to Dover ; thence by steamer to Calais. It was a glorious day. The sun shone brightly. There was hardly a ripple on the water ; and the atmosphere was so clear that the coast of France was easily discernible before we left the English shore. A rush for folding chairs, and then a sense of calmness and rest, as we lengthened the distance between ourselves and the sphere of work and worry which we had recently occupied. We meant to enjoy ourselves, and so our gaze, mental as well as bodily, was forward, towards the romantic little country of lakes and mountains. The journey was comparatively void of interest. We had not thought of engaging a sleeping-car, and were therefore cooped up all night in a close carriage full of passengers who had been our sole companions for twelve hours already. It was a great relief to find ourselves at early morning at a station where we could be refreshed, with the aid of a bucket of water, one or two of the company being happily provided with soap and towels, which they courteously passed round. Arrived at Bâle, we enjoyed a hearty breakfast, and having changed our train for one essentially Swiss in construction, at 10 a.m. were landed at the lovely town of Lucerne. Here we were met by our host (for we were fortunate enough to have friends in the locality) and in about twenty minutes we were at the door of a charming little villa, on the slope of a hill overlooking the lake, where a cordial greeting awaited us. Our host was a cheerful, well-informed Englishman, about forty years of age, who had travelled extensively in the Old and the New World, and had finally purchased a pleasantly situated estate here, and settled down with his accomplished wife (an American) and his interesting family.

Standing upon the verandah we looked over the lake and saw the famous pine-clad Rigi on the one side and the less prominent well-wooded Bürgenstock on the other, and beyond these mountain rose above mountain, some of whose summits were still capped with snow. Behind us was the rugged Mount Pilatus. Below us was the deep blue lake, with its many steamers, and the picturesque town, the cathedral with its two slender spires and wall with its seven feudal watch-towers forming prominent features of the landscape.

We seemed to be in dreamland. Twenty-four hours previously

we were in smoky London ; now we were in the midst of the most enchanting views, and breathing the most salubrious air. But our time was limited, so we began at once to explore the neighbourhood.

Our first expedition was naturally to the town itself. Lucerne can boast of a long and not ignoble history. Its origin dates back to the early centuries of the Christian era. At that time it was a small village, whose inhabitants earned a scanty livelihood as fishermen ; but by degrees it increased in size and importance, and at length became the centre of Roman Catholicism in Switzerland. As early as the year 450 A.D. it possessed a church, dedicated to St. Nicholas, and in 695 A.D. the cathedral and convent of St. Leodegar were founded by Wickard, Duke of Swabia. It has retained its allegiance to the Pope to the present day, not more than 2,000 out of a population of about 20,000 holding the Protestant faith. In 1332 the inhabitants took a prominent part in the struggle with their Austrian oppressors, having entered into confederation with the three cantons, Uri, Schwyz and Unterwalden, to obtain and preserve their freedom. In 1454 the wooden houses of which the town was chiefly composed \* were replaced by stone dwellings and the streets were paved. The thoroughfares were also made more uniform in breadth. The plan adopted to secure this object was curious but effective. An iron rod was carried through the streets cross-wise, and wherever the houses projected too much the owners were required to set them back. Quays and side walks were also constructed, the citizens heartily co-operating with the civil authorities in their endeavour to improve and beautify the town. The fortifications on the Musegg, which terminate in a massive tower called the Nöllithurm, date from 1409, and other objects of interest which we shall have occasion to mention can boast of equal antiquity. The fountain in the Wine Market, a good specimen of Gothic architecture, was erected in 1481, and the arsenal, near the barracks, in 1568. In fact the older part of Lucerne still wears a mediæval aspect, many of the houses dating from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and contrasting strangely with the palatial nineteenth century hotels and equally new villa residences which line the shores of the lake.

\* The roofs of these houses were the favourite resort of multitudes of storks, so that the town was nicknamed "the wooden storks' nest."

The present CATHEDRAL or HOF KIRCHE, a spacious stone building covered with cement, was built in the middle of the seventeenth century, the original structure having being destroyed by fire. It has no great architectural pretensions; the exterior is very plain and the spires are remarkably simple, though carried to extremely fine points; but the interior is adorned with gorgeous altars emblazoned with gold and coloured images of the Virgin, the Christ and some of the saints, that on the north-east, which represents the death of the Virgin, dating from the fifteenth century. The reredos of the high altar, depicting Christ on the Mount of Olives, by Lanfranc, is finely executed. Before the wrought-iron screen which separates the nave from the choir is a lofty imposing crucifix. The walls are plastered, their monotony being relieved by old oil paintings with scriptural subjects. The pillars (which are nearly square) and the ceiling are unadorned. The windows also look very bare, only two small panes of each being filled with coloured glass. The pews are large and cumbersome, but admirably carved at the ends. The pulpit, which is lofty and stands about the centre of the left aisle of the church, is of oak, and ornamented with some good bas-reliefs. It is approached by winding stairs and is surmounted by a heavy-looking sounding-board. Over each arch is a large figure of a saint. The organ is one of the largest and best-toned in Europe. Its *vox humana* stop has a world-wide reputation. The singing gallery in front of it is of open stone work, with a chaste design. The west porch has handsome carved oak doors and stone pillars, and contains life-size figures of SS. Leodegarius, Benedictus, Petrus, Mauritius, Nicolaus and Clemens. The outer walls of the cathedral are decorated with crucifixes, memorial tablets and a large fresco representing our Lord in the Garden of Gethsemane. The walls of the cloisters are also adorned with several paintings, and on some of the tombstones may be seen photographic and other portraits of those whose remains are interred beneath. The churchyard contains some good monuments, and during the summer, especially, is beautified by the numerous bouquets and flowers by which the living seek to show their reverence and love for the dead.

One hour every evening during the season a performance is given on the organ, when one franc is charged for admission. On the day preceding our visit to the cathedral a heavy thunder-

storm had broken over the town. The organist imitated the roll of the thunder and the pattering of the rain against the windows with such startling effect that it really seemed as if another storm had suddenly risen, and it was a pleasurable surprise to us on leaving to find that the sky was serene and bright. Above the roar and tumult thus vividly represented the *vox humana* stop produced a piteous wail, which thrilled the audience with indescribable emotion.

The annual festival in commemoration of the Assumption of the Virgin induced us to visit the sacred edifice again. We arrived at nine o'clock a.m. and felt sure that we should be in time for the commencement of the service, but already a monk dressed in a grey tunic was occupying the pulpit. The portion of the discourse which we heard must have lasted an hour. How long he had been speaking we did not inquire. The church was thronged, every pew having more than its legitimate number—some seated, others kneeling in front—while the aisles were crowded with patient and attentive listeners. It was 11.45 a.m. before the service ended, and most of the congregation remained to the close.

Besides the cathedral there are several other Roman Catholic churches, among which may be mentioned the elaborately ornamented Jesuit church, dedicated to St. Xavier, near the post-office, with its massive red pillars on either side of the altar, its painted ceilings and numerous relics most carefully preserved and labelled; the Franciscan church, built in the fifteenth century, in memory of those who fell in the battle of Sempach; and the chapel of Saint Peter, erected in the twelfth century, and decorated with paintings by P. von Deschwanden.

For the benefit of English Protestants a large Gothic church is rented, situated behind the Schweitzerhof Hotel. This church was originally built in 1861 by the German Lutherans, but it is now used on Sundays by the Old Catholics at 8.30 a.m.; by the French Protestants at 10 a.m.; and by the English Episcopalians at 11 a.m. and 5.30 p.m. The services of the latter are conducted under the auspices of the Church of England Continental Society. The attendance is usually good, and the hymns are judiciously selected, but the preaching—so far as our experience and inquiries went—is very poor, and the rendering of the liturgy is unattractive and even slovenly.

During the season a Scotch Presbyterian service is held at the

Maria Hilf Church—the only church which the Roman Catholics will grant for the use of Protestants; and an American service is held at the Hotel National. But, owing no doubt in a great measure to the thoroughly Catholic character of the population, the Protestants have no church exclusively their own.

The RIVER REUSS, which flows through the town, dividing it into the Gross stadt and Klein stadt, is spanned by four bridges. Two of these are ancient *covered* structures, built of wood. The chief, the *Kapellbrücke*, erected towards the end of the twelfth century, is carried obliquely across the river, uniting the Kapellplatz (so called after the chapel of St. Peter) with the Theaterquai, where there is a small colony of swans. In the centre is an old octagon tower, bearing the name of *Wasserthurm*, in which are deposited the archives of the town. According to tradition this building was once used by the Romans as a lighthouse (Latin, *Lucerna*), whence the town is said to have derived its name. The roof of the bridge is decorated with one hundred and fifty-four triangular paintings, more valuable for their antiquity than their execution, representing scenes in the lives of St. Maurice and St. Leger (the patron saints of Lucerne), and interesting events in Swiss history. The other, named *Mühlenbrücke*, or Spreuerbrücke, dates from the early part of the fifteenth century, and has its roof also decorated with triangular paintings, thirty-six in number, in imitation of Holbein's "Dance of Death." The *Neue Brücke*, or new bridge, erected in 1870, is a fine structure of stone and iron, spanning the broadest part of the river just where it flows into the lake, and leading direct from the railway station to the Schweitzerhof Quai. At the end nearest the quay is a column containing a barometer for the convenience of visitors. The fourth bridge, called the *Reussbrücke*, is a modern structure, and has no special attraction. The river is the resort of numerous black water-fowl. On certain parts of the banks a notice might be well posted up, "Washing done here," for groups of women may be seen busily engaged in laundry work, floating boards being chained for the purpose to the esplanade. Kneeling on the boards they use the swiftly flowing river as a spacious wash-tub, keeping up a brisk conversation enlivened by merry laughter as they pursue their daily task.

The HOTELS claim a word of recognition, though we had no occasion to use them. Of these, the Schweitzerhof and the

Hotels National, de l'Europe, and Beau Rivage deserve special notice. In front of the Schweitzerhof and National Hotels, which immediately face the lake and are almost in a line with each other, is a splendid promenade, with numerous seats under the shade of full-grown chestnut trees, where the pedestrian may rest and gaze at his leisure at the placid lake and the grand scenery beyond. For the information of strangers a semicircular stone tablet has been conveniently placed on the Schweitzerhof Quay, upon which are inscribed the names and heights of all the surrounding mountains. Standing here we see on the right Mount Pilatus, and on the extreme left the Rigi ; nearly opposite us is the dark-faced Bürgenstock ; and towering beyond it we trace out the Rossberg, the Ross-stock chain, the Nieder Bauen and Ober Bauen, the Buochserhorn, the Stanserhorn and the Engelberg Alps, of which Titlis is the grandest, and the most easily ascended of all the Alpine peaks. The KURSAAL, in which concerts and theatrical entertainments are given, is situated just beyond the National Hotel. It was built by a French company, and is said to be one of the most magnificent structures of its kind in Europe.

One of the chief objects of interest in the town, and probably the most widely known, is the "LION OF LUCERNE," a massive monument hewn in bas-relief out of the solid sandstone rock, and described by a writer not much given to sentiment as "the saddest and most touching piece of sculpture ever executed." It was chiselled in 1821, by Ahorn, a native of Constance, after a model by the Danish sculptor Thorvaldsen, and commemorates the death of 26 officers and 760 soldiers, at the Tuileries, A.D. 1792, in defence of Louis XVI. of France, upon whom Carlyle has pronounced a stirring eulogy. The lion is represented as reclining in a grotto, his body pierced with a broken lance. He is evidently dying, but though his strength is fast waning he is still protecting with his paw a shield upon which is figured the Bourbon lily ; and close by his head, guarded by a spear, is another shield leaning against the side of the grotto, bearing a Greek or St. George's cross, the heraldic arms of Switzerland. Above the monument, in bold letters, are the words :

HELVETIORUM FIDEI AC VIRTUTI;

and beneath it is the following inscription :

DIE X AUGUSTI II. ET III SEPTEMBRIS MDCCXCII  
 HAEC SUNT NOMINA EORUM QUI NE SACRAMENTI FIDEM FALLERENT  
 FORTISSIME PUGNANTES ECIDERUNT SOLERTI AMICORUM CURA CLADI SUPERFUERUNT  
 DUCES XXVI. DUCES XVI.



A long list of names is here appended which need not be reproduced.

The position of the monument is unique. The rock, in the side of which it has been cut, is almost perpendicular and is overhung by trees. At its foot is a pond, kept fresh and sparkling by a descending stream, in which the lion may often be seen reflected. Seats are placed in front for the accommodation of visitors, and a well-furnished bazaar offers, among other tempting commodities, copies of "the Lion" in various styles and at all prices to suit the convenience of purchasers. Besides this monument to the heroism of the slain there is a small chapel near the rock dedicated to their memory, which bears the inscription, "Invictis Pax" (peace to the unconquered). The interior is hung with the banners and weapons of the Guard, and on the 10th August each year masses are still said for the repose of their souls.

The Lion Monument Museum, close by, contains a series of large paintings, viz: "The Fight between the Swiss Guards and the Mob in Paris, during the French Revolution" (Aug. 10, 1792); "The Arrest of the Royal Family at Varennes" (June 21, 1791); and a copy of Muller's famous picture of "The last Victims of the Reign of Terror." There is also here a picture-gallery comprising works of some of the more prominent artists in Switzerland and other countries; and H. Moser's ethnological collections of Central Asia.

Not far from the "Lion" is the GLACIER GARDEN, a most interesting relic of the period when almost the whole of Switzerland and a large part of the northern hemisphere were covered with ice some thousands of feet in depth. This garden contains several gigantic pot-holes—termed in geology *glacier mills*—the largest of which is 26 feet wide and 30 feet deep. These owe their origin to large boulders whirled round and round in natural depressions of the rock by water flowing beneath a glacier, till each made a cup for itself in which it now rests. The spiral windings which indicate a movement from east to west are plainly discernible. In addition to the large mills, several smaller ones may be seen, more or less perfectly formed, between the crevasses of the rock; besides erratic blocks, and rocks polished or grooved by glacial action. The garden was discovered in October, 1872, by some workmen employed in making a wine cellar, and

one of the mills was nearly destroyed before the value of the discovery was known.

Trees and shrubs have now grown up around the mills, which are connected by steps and bridges for the convenience of the public, and a descriptive leaflet in four languages which is handed to the visitor enables him to pass round from one to the other without trouble or loss of time. But the garden contains other relics beside those of the ice period, for at one spot we find a layer of rocks, abounding in fossils of sea shells, pointing to a period when the country at the foot of the Alps was covered by the sea, and close by is the petrification of a palm, discovered by breaking a stone near the gardens—a clear indication that once the ground was covered by a tropical forest. Thus three distinct and widely-separated epochs are here brought together as in the pages of a book—the time of tropical heat and of icy cold, and the time when the ocean covered the land. How many millions of years are represented by these mighty changes the geologist can only guess.

From the garden, paths lead up to a kiosk, in which is exhibited an old bas-relief of Central Switzerland, by General Pfyffer, the inventor of this method of pictorial representation. Pursuing the road as far as the Capuchin monastery of Wesemlin\* and turning to the right, we come by an ascending path to the Drei Linden, or Three Lindens, whence perhaps the most extensive view may be obtained of the town, lake and mountains. In the vicinity of the Lion Monument are also *Meyer's Diorama* (in Zurich Strasse) and *Stauffer's Museum*. The former (says the prospectus) "enables us in the easiest possible way to see the finest, most interesting and sublime mountain scenery in the world." The latter contains a very complete collection of stuffed Alpine animals, in their natural attitudes; but these the writer had no time to inspect.

The RATHHAUS in the Corn Market, erected in 1660, is well worth a visit. The staircase is Gothic, and the council chamber is beautifully carved and adorned with portraits of former local celebrities. On the ground floor is a small but interesting picture-gallery, and a museum, in which may be seen relics of pre-historic, Celtic, Roman, Germanic, and mediæval times, including

\* This convent is one of the most ancient in Switzerland and possesses a large library.

some good specimens of stained glass, and many objects relating to the struggle of the Swiss to obtain their freedom ; trophies of the wars with Burgundy and the Milanese, the coat of mail of the Austrian Duke Leopold, the ring of Charles the Bold, and relics of William Tell. Adjoining this is an ancient tower, erected in 1350, ornamented with frescoes, somewhat defaced by age and atmospheric influences, illustrating the Battle of Sempach, where the Austrians were routed on the 9th July, 1386, and the death of the magistrate Gundolfingen in the strife. Between the Corn Market and the Wine Market, on the bank of the river, stands an ancient building called UNTER DER EGG, now used as a vegetable market, where, if we may judge from the crowded stalls and throngs of purchasers, a brisk trade is carried on.

On the opposite side of the Reuss (the Klein-stadt) are several noted buildings. We referred at the commencement of this paper to the ARSENAL, erected in 1568. Here may be seen some fine stained glass windows, and several Turkish flags captured at the Battle of Lepanto, besides suits of armour and mediæval weapons used at the Battle of Sempach. Not far off is the MUSEUM, which contains the cantonal library of 80,000 volumes and a natural history collection. Behind this stands the FRANCISCAN CHURCH (before mentioned), founded by the Countess Gutta von Schauensee ; and in the immediate neighbourhood is the GOVERNMENT HOUSE, with the council hall, &c., in which also the General POST and TELEGRAPH OFFICES are located. It is worthy of observation that until the year 1770 this building was a Jesuit convent, and it "presents us with a remarkable copy of a Roman palace, with a *cortila* and *loggia* in the Florentine style." The JESUIT CHURCH, of which we have already spoken, stands close by. It was built in 1667. The interior, as we have intimated, is richly decorated, the reredos of the High Altar being specially to be commended. Adjoining it is a chapel containing, among other treasures, a coat belonging to the holy hermit St. Nicholas von der Flüe, whose powers of fasting far exceeded those of Dr. Tanner, Succi, or any who have sought notoriety in this direction in modern times. In the immediate vicinity are the TOWN LIBRARY, with its 14,000 volumes, and the STATE ARCHIVES, containing documents belonging to the twelfth and succeeding centuries, and a collection of about 12,000 coins. The THEATRE, which is also on this side of the river, was erected in 1837.

Near the Bale Gate is the GÜTSCH, a steep hill about 230 feet high, from the summit of which the whole town may be clearly viewed. He who wishes may climb, but the ascent may also be made in three minutes by the funicular railway or cable train. Each engine is fitted with a tank. The descending one is filled with water; the ascending one is empty; and the seats of the carriages are so arranged that, notwithstanding the steepness of the gradient, the passengers maintain a horizontal position. At the top of the hill is a good restaurant, from the terrace of which the visitor may drink in a scene of great beauty, comprising not only the many prominent objects in the town itself—its walls, bridges, cathedral, churches, hotels, &c.—but also a portion of the lake, and a whole panorama of mountains, bounded on one side by the Rigi and on the other by the Pilatus. Here, too, is the Villa Wallis, where Queen Victoria once sojourned for six weeks. The pine woods adjoining, called the *Gütschwald*, supply many shady walks, whence, in about half-an-hour, Sonnenberg may be reached, another popular resort of those in search of charming scenery.

Our worthy host favoured us with some very pleasant drives in the neighbourhood. In the course of one of these, we visited the English cemetery at Meggen, a quiet little nook, with many chaste monuments. A picnic was also arranged for us on the shores of the lake. One evening we dined at a well-known restaurant, where, seated under the shadow of leafy trees, we were served by waitresses in their attractive native costume, and enjoyed some excellent music from four Neapolitan singers, who, if we may judge from the numerous silver coins (with a few gold pieces shining among them) which filled the plates handed round for our contributions, must have made a rich harvest by the exercise of their talents, which we understood were in nightly request.

Many delightful walks were also indicated to us, which would open up fresh scenes of beauty. But these required more leisure than we had at our disposal. We saw enough, however, to assure us that Lucerne was not only a good starting-place for the tourist bent on exploring some of the most enchanting districts of Switzerland, but that it had also claims of its own upon the lover of the quaint, the romantic, and the picturesque.

## PART II.

FEW travellers would think of visiting Lucerne without ascending THE RIGI (originally called *Die Rigi*, the strata). Accordingly, one of our first excursions was to this far-famed spot.

The group of mountains bearing this name is 25 miles in circumference. Its extreme elevation is 5,906 feet above the level of the sea, or 4,470 feet above the lake. On one side it looks down upon Lake Lucerne; on the other upon Lake Zug. Its summits are crowned with verdure, and woods and orchards adorn its slopes to a considerable height. The wealth of its pastures may be judged from the fact that 4,000 head of cattle feed upon them. But its chief attraction is the vast and varied scene which it unfolds to the spectator—a panorama said to be 300 miles in extent, embracing a long and magnificent range of mountains, reaching to the Black Forest of Germany, and including the Bernese Oberland. Thirteen lakes are also visible from its highest point.

We were fortunate in selecting a bright warm sunny day for our journey, and took steamer to Vitznau, whence the mountain may be ascended by rail. As the boat receded from the shore, the town walls with their antique towers, the Gothic churches and curious old buildings intermingled with the numerous grand modern hotels and *pensions* which skirt the lake for some distance, presented a striking scene. Then came many new objects of interest, following one another in quick succession—pleasant villas and cottages dotted about upon the fertile slopes; the little village of Seeburg, with its parish church and parsonage, and just opposite, among lofty poplar trees, a white house called Tribschen, where Richard Wagner resided for many years, and where much of his music was composed; Meggenhorn, with its picturesque inlets, and with an old castle crowning its heights; the little snow-white chapel of St. Nicholas, the patron of fishermen, which occupies a rocky islet near the shore; and, close by, another small island named Altstadt, with some old ruins upon it; the modern *château* of Neuhabsburg, contrasting strangely with some adjacent ruins which are overshadowed and half concealed by wide-spreading beeches; Weggis,\*

\* Here the Spanish chestnut, fig and almond trees flourish in the open air. The village was the scene of a terrible disaster in 1795. Great masses

with its pensions, a pretty village in a sheltered nook, where most of the vegetables for Lucerne are grown and where there is a foot-path to the summit of the Rigi. These and some other noteworthy places were all pointed out to us in turn as the steamboat glided along, until at length we arrived at Vitznau, the terminus of the Rigi Railway. Thirty years ago Vitznau was a retired spot approached from the land only by two steep foot-paths from Gersau and Weggis. Horses and carriages were unknown, and those who wished to communicate with the outer world had recourse chiefly to rowing boats. Now the village—during the summer months, at least—is a scene of constant bustle and activity; representatives of all nations thronging the waiting-room of the station, and the railway carriages, as one after another they are dispatched on their upward journey. A few particulars respecting this unique arrangement for making mountain ascent easy may be interesting.

The railway was constructed by three Swiss engineers, Messrs. Riggerbach, Zschokke and Näff, and cost over £80,000.\* It was opened for traffic on May 21, 1871. Its length is 4 miles 3 furlongs. The grade varies from 6'8 to 25 in 100; but the average rise is 20'4. The ordinary gauge is used, but between the two usual lines of rail there is a third, fitted with wrought-iron teeth, in which a cog-wheel with 20 teeth works, which is situated beneath the locomotive. This locomotive is itself a clever piece of mechanism, specially constructed to suit the unusual conditions under which it works. It is the invention of Riggerbach, of Olten, and is of 120 horse power. It has a vertical boiler with a cylinder on each side, the piston rod of which is connected with the crank axle, and this again with the driving-wheel. The tender is used as a receptacle for passengers' luggage, as well as for coal and water. Each train consists of a locomotive and one carriage. The latter is quite open at the sides, so as to afford the passengers as full a view as possible of the lake and mountains. In the ascent the engine is placed behind and pushes the train up—it being found desirable, in this instance at any rate, to place the cart before the horse. In

of earth on the Rigi had been reduced by continuous rains to the consistency of mud, which descended like an avalanche, destroying everything in its path, covering 80 acres of land, and pushing 30 houses into the water.

\* Another line of railway starts from Arth a small town on the Lake of Zug.



descending, it occupies the ordinary position, but is required, not to draw the carriage, but to check its too rapid progress. In the uphill journey steam is employed, but in coming down the mountain it is not needed, the speed being regulated simply by means of compressed air. The traveller must not expect to go by "express"—the ordinary speed is only three miles an hour; but by way of compensation he can leisurely scan the magnificent and ever-changing views that surround him. Nor need he be alarmed at the steepness of the incline. There is practically no fear of engine and carriage parting company, though they are not coupled in the ordinary way; for each is furnished with a powerful double-action break, which can be screwed up so tightly to the rails as to stop the train almost instantaneously.

We had not long to wait; for though each carriage has only a limited accommodation, the trains are dispatched quickly one after another. We took our seats, and soon the signal was given to start. The sensation was peculiar, though we had had a similar experience on a small scale on the Gütsch railway. The seats are so sloped that, in spite of the steepness of the incline, we maintained a horizontal position, but the trees, rocks and houses appeared to be bent back, as by some enchantment. This was specially noticeable in descending.

Time would fail us to describe the route in detail. One moment we passed through a short tunnel. At another point we passed over a yawning chasm spanned by a light bridge. At Freibergen, 3,330 feet up the mountain, the train stopped to take water. Then on it moved again, revealing at every turn fresh scenes of grandeur and beauty—lofty peaks and placid lakes, or some mountain torrent dashing down to the lowest depths of the abyss. At the height of 3,887 feet we arrived at the Romiti-Felsenthorn station, whence we pursued our way across Alpine pastures interspersed with groups of gnarled fir trees. As we proceeded, however, we observed that the foliage became scantier and vegetation generally was more monotonous. Our next halting place was Kaltbad station, at a height of 4,697 feet, with its handsome and well-appointed hotel. Here was the junction of the Scheideck railway—the loftiest railway line in Europe, with an elevation above the sea level varying from 4,713 to 5,402 feet. This line leads direct to Rigi Scheideck, which is said to be "the

largest of the climatic resorts on the Rigi." There were many signs of life and activity here ; but we only waited long enough to discharge any passengers who wished to remain at Kaltbad or proceed to Scheideck. We may avail ourselves of the short pause given us here to impart what little information we obtained respecting the place. The Grand Hotel and Kurhaus at Kaltbad are situated on a sunny slope, completely sheltered from the cold winds by shady groves and gardens. The terrace affords a magnificent view of lakes and mountains, and the adjacent woods a pleasant resort for those who prefer quiet meditation, or sweet intercourse with a friend. Picturesquely placed among vast fragments of rock is a small chapel, used during the week by the Roman Catholics, and on Sundays also by the English Protestants ; and close by rises the cold and pellucid *Schwesterborn*, or Fountain of the Sisters, from which the hotel derives its name. (*Kalt*, cold ; *bad*, bath.)

In connection with this spring there is a pretty legend, which may here be transcribed.

"At the time when, under the Emperor Albrecht, the Austrian governors of the three Cantons of Uri, Schwyz and Unterwalden were exercising their tyrannical sway, the lord of the castle on the Island of Schwanau, in Lake Lowerz, was smitten with the charms of three beautiful but virtuous sisters, living in the neighbourhood of Arth. To escape his troublesome importunities the maidens fled to the pathless wilds of the Rigi. Upon reaching the place where the spring issues from its rocky source, they resolved to fix their dwelling there, and to this end they erected a little hut of bark. How long they remained on the spot is not recorded, but it is certain that they never returned to their native valley. One summer night, however, the herdsmen on the Rigi remarked three bright lights hovering over the wooded rocks. They followed the lights, which led them to the little hut, where they found the mortal remains of the three pious sisters. The chapel of *Maria zum Bad* was forthwith erected on the spot where the hut had stood, and the spring was known henceforth as the *Fountain of the Sisters*."

The spring is said to possess healing virtues, which were known and utilized as early as the sixteenth century. Here came gouty and rheumatic patients, crawling as well as they were able. They used to bathe themselves without removing their clothes, and

then lay in the sun till they were dry—a method of ablution which found favour with those also who suffered from intermittent fever, and (if we may believe tradition) with most satisfactory results. The waters are still used both externally and internally for the same maladies.

But we have spent more time in speaking of Kaltbad than we were detained at the station. We had now been literally pushed two-thirds up the mountain. The next station was Staffel, 5,257 feet above the level of the sea, where any who did not wish to proceed farther could obtain accommodation at either the *Hotel-pension Staffel*, or the *Hotel Staffel-Kulm*. A brief stay here and we started again in our curious little conveyance, rising at a gradient of about 15 in 100, and at length arrived at the terminus at Rigi Kulm, having travelled a distance of nearly five miles. The altitude of the station is 5,724 feet. A gentle walk now brought us to the extreme summit of the Rigi, whence we enjoyed an uninterrupted view of the low-lying lands on the north, and the chains of mountains that bound the horizon on the south. But a mere enumeration of these would avail little. One must stand on the summit, guide-book in hand, as we did, or with one of the neat and inexpensive panoramic views which can be purchased at any of the fancy stalls (which are to be found here, as at most fashionable resorts), and trace out one by one the lakes and towns, and mountain peaks covered with perpetual snow. The sublimity of the scene cannot be easily put into words, and we shall not attempt it.

Two large hotels—the *Hotel Rigi Kulm* and the *Hotel Schreiber*—furnish ample accommodation for visitors, many of whom avail themselves of this for a brief, if not a longer sojourn, in order to witness the sunrise and sunset. We enjoyed this privilege on another occasion from a loftier eminence. Our stay on the Rigi lasted only a few hours, but we were highly favoured in every respect. The sky was cloudless, and the atmosphere above and below us was remarkably clear. Often, though the sky is bright, the lowlands are buried beneath a sea of mist, and the breezes, however healthy, are too strong to be agreeable. But on this particular day there was nothing to grumble about. The mighty host of glittering peaks stood forth on one side in silent grandeur, while on the other the deep blue lakes glistened in the sunshine among the surrounding hills, breaking the monotony of the plains

below, or washing the shores of towns which looked in the distance like tiny toys.

The popularity of the Rigi may be judged from the fact that there are now eight hotels at various spots, affording accommodation for 2,000 guests, while the average number of tourists who avail themselves annually of the Vitznau-Rigi railway is between 30,000 and 40,000 persons, besides those who prefer to go on foot.

But though the Rigi is the most popular mountain in the immediate vicinity of Lucerne, the views from MOUNT PILATUS well repay any tourist who is willing to make an ascent. Until a very recent date this could only be done on foot or on horseback, the latter mode requiring tolerably strong nerves, though it is not so perilous as it appears. Hence probably the small number of visitors that attempted the journey. But a railway similar in construction to that on the Rigi is now completed,\* and a brighter future it is hoped is now in store for this rugged giant. In ancient times Pilatus was called *Fractus Mons* (broken mountain), on account of its wild serrated cliffs. Its lower slopes, however, are well wooded and contain good pasture land.

The name *Pilatus* is, according to Trench ("Study of Words"), derived from the Latin *Mons Pileatus*, the hatted mountain, so called because of the clouds that so frequently gather around its summit, assuming the appearance of a hat. According to popular belief, however, it was named after Pontius Pilate, the proconsul of Judea, who (tradition says) spent the latter years of his life in the recesses of the mountain on his banishment from Palestine, and terminated his miserable existence in remorse and despair, rather than in penitence, by plunging into a small lake on the summit, which has since been credited with supernatural qualities, and was even said to be fathomless and to lead directly to the centre of the earth. Readers of Scott's "Anne of Geierstein" may remember the legend as narrated there by a Swiss guide, who further stated that a form was often seen to emerge from the gloomy waters and go through the action of one washing his hands; but "whether water refused to do the executioner's duty upon such a wretch, or whether, his body being drowned, his vexed spirit continued to haunt the place where he committed suicide, Antonio did not pretend to explain." Anyhow, when-

\*Opened in June, 1889. The line is nearly three miles in extent. The average gradient is 42 in 100.

ever the form appeared engaged in this ablutionary exercise, "dark clouds of mist" (said the guide) "gathered first round the bosom of the Infernal Lake (such it had been styled of old) and then, wrapping the whole of the upper part of the mountain in darkness, presaged a tempest or hurricane, which was sure to follow in a short space. He added that the Evil Spirit was peculiarly exasperated at the audacity of such strangers as ascended the mountain to gaze at his (Pilate's) place of punishment, and that in consequence the magistrates of Lucerne had prohibited any one from approaching Mount Pilatus, under severe penalties." ("Anne of Geierstein," chap i.)

These restrictions have long since been removed, though the legend of Pilate's connection with the mountain may still be credited by some of the peasantry, and indeed was seriously repeated to us by a middle-aged native who acted as our guide.

The highest pinnacle of Pilatus is the *Tomlishorn*, 6,998 feet above the sea level; but the peak most frequently ascended is called the *Esel*, just 33 feet less. This mountain therefore is about 1,000 feet higher than the Rigi, and the panorama is on a grander scale.

Here it was that we saw the sun rise. Driving to the village of Hergiswyl, we purchased our *Alpen-stocks* and commenced our pedestrian feat. The journey on foot, according to the guide-books, can be accomplished in four and a half hours, but having the whole day before us we "took it easy," pic-nicing on the way. A restaurant about half-way up supplied us with the means of quenching our thirst, and on reaching the *Klimsenhorn*, where there is a pretty little Catholic chapel, we partook of coffee at the hotel. The goats' milk with which it was enriched was hardly to our taste, though there was a plentiful supply. Goats abound upon the mountains, and the tinkling of the bells with which they are furnished falls pleasantly on the ear—the only sound often that breaks the silence that reigns on those mountain heights.

Hitherto the ascent had been easy, but from this point it required a little more caution. We had to pass through a short tunnel, up a flight of wooden steps, one or two of which sadly needed repair, and soon after arrived at the *Esel*, where we secured our beds for the night at the *Belle Vue Hotel*.\*

\*The Pilatus Kulm, the terminus of the railway, adjoins this hotel, but a new hotel is in process of erection.

It was now getting dusk, so mounting the summit of the Esel we watched the sun set behind the distant mountains of Jura, sinking deeper and deeper until only the highest points were illuminated, and at length showing only a narrow rim of gold, while the icy peaks opposite assumed for a brief season a roseate hue and then turned pale and cold as death.

It was a case of "early to bed and early to rise" if we would see the monarch of the heavens begin his course again. We were up in good time, however, and, wrapped in a red blanket which we had borrowed from the bed—for the cold was intense—we took our station among a motley crowd of sight-seers. It was about 3.30 a.m. when we emerged from the hotel, but already the night was waning and the stars were fading from the sky. Soon the snow-clad mountains began to change colour, passing in swift stages from white to yellow and from yellow to faint crimson, as the first beams of the morning sun kissed their icy foreheads. Gradually forests, lakes and towns disclosed themselves, but all at first was grey and cold. Then came a flash of light, and as we gazed eastward the golden disc appeared above the horizon, and mounting gradually higher and higher, poured forth a flood of light and warmth upon the scene. The crowd soon dispersed, and after a good breakfast we prepared to descend the mountain, having plucked some Alpine roses with which to adorn—after the prevailing fashion—the top of our staff. We came down by a different route, which led us a good part of the way through a dense wood with a well-beaten path, albeit it was somewhat steep and trying to the feet. The path brought us to *Alpnacht*, whence we took steamer to Nicklausen, which was within an easy walking distance of our host's villa.

To residents at Lucerne, Pilatus is a good weather guide. Usually during the early part of the day its rugged pinnacles are partially if not wholly concealed by mist or fog, or the summits are discernible while a little lower down it is encircled by clouds. If in the morning the "Krone," or highest peak, is clearly defined, unsettled weather may be expected; but if it is veiled with fog till mid-day, the afternoon will probably be fine. To one unaccustomed to mountainous regions it was somewhat curious to find Pilatus sometimes entirely shut out from view, as if a great curtain had been lowered in front of it, and then gradually appear as the curtain lifted, rolled up by an unseen hand. We



observed the same phenomenon with respect to other heights which rarely condescended to show themselves till noon.

For those who do not care to make so toilsome a journey as the Pilatus involves, the BÜRGENSTOCK may be recommended. It is easy to ascend on foot, and indeed there is a carriage drive up to the hotel and sanatorium, whence it is a pleasant stroll to *Hamatschwand*, the highest point. We included this, therefore, among our trips from Lucerne, taking the steamboat to *Stansstad*, a pretty village on the lake.

THE LAKE OF THE FOUR CANTONS, as it is called (*Vierwaldstättersee*), presents numerous attractions, and any one making even a brief sojourn at Lucerne must find time for one or two expeditions on its waters. A rowing or sailing boat is somewhat risky, except under the guidance of one who is familiar with the lake, for sudden squalls sometimes arise, and the unwary traveller may be easily capized. But the steamers are large and well constructed, and the fares are reasonable. The shape of the lake is cruciform. Its extreme length, from Lucerne to Flüelen, is 25 English miles, its width varying from one to three miles. The length of its arms, from Alpnacht to Küsnacht, is 14 miles; its greatest depth is 508 feet. Small bays and promontories and picturesque villages dotted about add to the charm, and along the entire route lofty mountains rear their giant heads, gaining in height as we proceed. The shores, too, possess historical and romantic interest, for here are laid the scenes immortalized by Schiller in his play of "William Tell." Some doubt whether such a person as Tell ever existed, and whether Schiller ever saw the localities which he so graphically describes; but Altdorf, an easy walk from Flüelen, is pointed out as the scene of one of his stirring exploits.\* *Tellsplatte*, a quiet retreat on the lake, is named after him, and contains a small chapel erected to his memory, and about half-way between Küsnacht and Immensee (on the lake of Zug) is another chapel bearing his name, on the spot where he is supposed to have killed his oppressor Gessler. The story is well known and needs only the briefest narration. William Tell is said to have been one of the chief of the confederates who restored to Switzerland its independence. Gessler,

\* Tell is said to have been born at Bürglen, a neighbouring village to Altdorf. On the heights where his house stood is a chapel, painted over with scenes from the patriot's life.

who had been made governor under the Austrian Emperor Albert, placed the ducal hat of his master upon a pole in the market-place of Altdorf, and commanded all who passed by to make obeisance to it. Tell refused, and was sentenced to shoot with his arrow an apple placed upon the head of his son. The cruel tyrant hoped that the weapon would miss its mark, but Tell's aim was so sure that the apple was cleft in two and the boy unhurt. Observing a second arrow in his girdle, Gessler inquired its object, and Tell boldly replied, "To have slain thee, if I had killed my son." Upon this the governor ordered him to be bound and conveyed by boat to the dungeon of his own castle. But a storm arose, and the boatmen declared that they would all be lost unless Tell, who was regarded as the best pilot on the lake, was allowed to take the helm. Gessler therefore consented to his being released from his fetters, whereupon Tell steered for the point of land now known as *Tellsplatte*, and jumping ashore pushed back the boat, and escaped to the mountains. Shortly after he shot the governor, and the confederates, having taken arms, delivered their country from its oppressors.

The route from Lucerne to Flüelen takes the tourist past Weggis and Vitznau, whence the Rigi is ascended, and then through a narrow strait, formed by two promontories, into the Bay of Buochs, whence the summit of the Buochserhorn (5,940 feet high) may be seen. We proceed next to Beckenreid, a small village, noted for the possession of a gigantic walnut tree, said to be 400 years old. On the opposite shore is Gersau, with its fruitful orchards, well protected from adverse winds by the rocks that inclose it. Thence, through another strait, we arrive at Brunnen, a somewhat favourite resort, which may be regarded as the entrance to the Bay of Uri. Over against Brunnen is a pyramid of rock, called the Mythenstein, 80 feet high, with an inscription in gold letters to the memory of Schiller, "the Bard of Tell ;" \* and close by, deep hidden in a wood, just below Seelisberg, is a meadow, called the *Rütli*, which might truly be designated "the cradle of national liberty," where on the night of November 7th, 1307, thirty-three confederates from the cantons of Uri, Schwyz and Unterwalden bound themselves by a solemn

\* The inscription reads thus :—"Dem Säng'er Tells. Friedr. Schiller, die Urkantone. 1860."

oath not to rest until they and their countrymen were freed from the Austrian yoke.

One mile beyond Brunnen is the lordly Axenstein, commanding a fine view of both arms of the lake, and described by Queen Victoria as the most beautiful spot she ever visited.

In half an hour more we arrive at Tellsplatte. The little chapel, erected here in 1388, and rebuilt in 1860, contains four finely executed frescoes, by Stückelberg of Bâle, depicting incidents in Tell's life. Every year, on the Friday after Ascension Day, a patriotic sermon is preached here at 7 a.m. The service is largely attended by the lake dwellers in the vicinity, who come in boats decorated for the occasion. Amid grand and majestic scenery we soon after reach Flüelen, where we disembark. We walked on to Altdorf to see Tell's monument, erected 1860, and the tower which also bears his name, and then returned on foot along the *Axenstrasse* from Flüelen to Tellsplatte, to view the chapel; whence we took the steamer back to Lucerne.

The Axenstrasse is a long carriage road, several miles in extent, cut in the side of the perpendicular rocks which border the lake, and winding its way at some points almost on a level with the water, and at others hundreds of feet above it. Here and there are tunnels, but light and airy, as wide openings have been made in the side facing the lake, whence, as through open windows, the tourist can look down upon the blue waters, and across them to the mountains upon the opposite shore. The road, which originally extended from Brunnen to Flüelen, has now been continued from Brunnen to Gersau, but the grandest part is unquestionably that which we traversed. The St. Gothard Railway is visible at intervals along the route, entering and emerging from the dark tunnels through which it runs, sometimes high above and sometimes considerably below the level of the road.

The sail from Lucerne to Küssnacht, which takes us along one of the arms of the lake, occupies an hour. On arriving at Küssnacht, a short drive through "the Hollow Way" brings the tourist to Tell's chapel:

"Where Tell directed the avenging dart  
With well-strung arm that first preserved his child."

Over the doorway of the chapel, which was erected in 1638, and

rebuilt in 1834, is a painting representing the death of Gessler, with an inscription. There are other paintings in the interior, depicting incidents of Tell's life, but not so well executed as those in the chapel at Tellsplatte, already referred to. The other arm of the lake takes us past Hergiswyl, the starting point for Pilatus, and Stansstad—whence the Bürgenstock is ascended, and excursions may be made to the valley of Engelberg—to Alpnacht, where we arrived on our descent from Pilatus. Favoured with fine weather these trips are most enjoyable, though they do not unfold so much romantic scenery as the longer journey down the lake.

Our stay in Lucerne was too short to allow us to form a fair judgment of the social qualities of the people. Our impression was that they took life easily. We noticed that the public clocks had only one hand—the hour hand—as if minutes were not worth reckoning. Every one seemed to be at leisure.\* Even the market women could find time for morning devotion in the churches, one of which we found full of this class at nine o'clock a.m. The babies, carried by their nurses strapped on pillows, appeared quite contented ; and perhaps this mode of carriage has some advantages over that with which we are most familiar. We were told that the maidens of Lucerne were noted for their personal charms. We may have been unfortunate in our observations, but the humbler classes, though neat and clean, did not strike us as being particularly good-looking, and exposure to the sun made many appear older, perhaps, than they were. At any rate one could not truthfully have replied to them, as one in *Punch* did to a lady who inquired what he thought her age might be : "Well, I don't know, but you don't look it." We should imagine that with an atmosphere so pure, and so little fret and worry, longevity was common. We met, indeed, not a few who reminded one of the venerable dame who is reported to have said that she could not tell her exact age ; indeed, she was so old that she could not remember the time when she was not alive.

FRED J. AUSTIN.

\* Of course the numerous visitors from all parts of the world give occupation to many ; others derive their subsistence chiefly from agricultural and kindred pursuits.

### In the Mughali.

SOMETIME in the year 1855, the Nizam's Government, as was then the custom, farmed the revenues of the village of Pertoor to a soucar, or native banker, in consideration of a sum of money paid down.

Before this worthy had time to levy the first instalment of rent, the Government, a not unusual practice in the Mughali (as the Nizam's country is often called, after its latest conquerors the Mughals), relet the village to a second soucar upon like terms.

Soucar No. 2, upon proceeding to inspect his kingdom, and finding No. 1 in possession, set to work, and levied a force of some fifty Rohillas for the purpose of ejecting No. 1, who on his side raised a like army for his defence.

Then followed (still in accordance with time-honoured custom) a succession of what were known as "country battles," or Homeric fights. The champions of each side, mounting upon handy hill-tops, or the walls of convenient tombs, abused their opponents, and especially the female relatives of the latter, in idiomatic and often poetical Hindoostanee, and even Persian; their armour-bearers filling up the intervals of silence, whilst the principals paused to take breath, with discharges of ill-fitting bullets, feebly propelled by the slow-burning powder of their long matchlocks.

Little harm was done to either side during this military picnic; a few unhappy villagers, or an occasional cow, struck by a spent bullet, being in all probability the only sufferers, and the little comedy was played without variation for a fortnight or more. There were divers marches and countermarches, alarms, excursions, but the contending hosts did not join battle. The fact was, that these Eastern Dugald Dalgetties, all men of Afghan descent, and good Mussulmen of course, by no means thirsted for each other's blood. They had no personal interest in the quarrel. They had a hearty contempt for their infidel paymasters, whom they amused with fond tales of the daring deeds which they would presently do, and were content, so long as their pay was forthcoming, that the siege of Pertoor should last even longer than the siege of Troy.

About the end of the fortnight, however, the Nizam's Government, whether shamed by the scandal which these bloody deeds

was causing, or whether Soucar No. 1 had managed to secure the ear of the minister or of the Resident, despatched an officer of rank, the Nawab Zoolfuchur Jung, with a force of some two or three hundred cutthroats, Arabs, Hubshees, and the like, to suppress the broil and bring the offenders to justice.

Soucar No. 1, strong in the justice of his cause, or trusting to his interest at court, held his ground with his banditti, whilst No. 2 disappeared, or lay low, and his forces fled for safety towards the neighbouring British station of Jaulnah, hotly pursued by the *regular* (?) troops.

Early in the morning, having reached the river which divides the Nizam's territory from the cantonment, they took possession of a large *goombuz*, or tomb, surrounded by a high wall, with a banquette on its inner side; and, deeming themselves safe from further pursuit, proceeded to cook their morning meal. They soon discovered however, that their confidence was misplaced, for whilst they were enjoying themselves in fancied security, the Nawab surrounded the goombuz with his motley crew, and cut off their retreat from the haven of safety across the stream.

The Nawab's men, though by no means the equals of the Rohillas in military "virtue," were sufficiently ferocious, and even brave. Badly paid at the best, often not paid at all, they lived for the most part on plunder, and like their present opponents, when business was slack and the regular government had no work to do, had little scruple in deserting their standards, and taking service with any man of means, whether orthodox or infidel, who had a job on hand. They were armed with blunderbusses, matchlocks, carbines, flintlocks, tulwars of course, and the never-absent dagger—from the terrible *bāznak* with a steel tiger's claw slipping on to each finger, with which to tear out the enemy's bowels—to the more simple and less artistic poniard. In addition, they had brought with them a few infant mortars, each throwing a one-pound shell; very dangerous ordnance, at any rate to those who stood behind them.

The Rohillas, on their side, were armed with sword and matchlock, besides the shield which (unlike the unblushing poet whose escape from the pursuing spear, not a few of us in our schoolboys days were wont to regret) they and their clansmen, are not used to throw away inglorious upon a stricken field.

About eight a.m. the cantonment magistrate, Captain Magrath,



returning from hunting along the Aurungubad road, spied the Rohilla sentries swaggering on the walls of the goombuz, and pouring words of ill savour upon their besiegers. He rode up to the fortress, unhindered by the latter, to see what these things might mean, and being admitted after some parley, was received by the Rohilla jemadar.

This jemadar was a young man, two or three and twenty years of age, tall and slim, beardless as yet, save for a slight brown moustache, with keen aquiline features which marked his Afghan descent, and the large grey eyes not uncommon amongst his tribesmen, which contrasted strikingly with the ruddy brown of his cheeks, and the dark curls of his thick black hair.

He saluted the magistrate respectfully, but in a manner wholly different from the cringing servility of the Hindoo, and proceeded to lay his case before him. He said, of course, that he and his brethren had done no wrong; that any breaches of the law which had taken place were committed by the other side; that the Nizam's troops had pursued them without cause; and he requested that Captain Magrath would obtain the general's permission for him to enter the cantonment with his band, where they would surrender their arms to the British authorities, only stipulating, that they should not be handed over to the Nawab without due inquiry, and until the general had satisfied himself that they were really guilty; otherwise they would be cast into prison, after being stripped of their property, and left there to rot without trial, or until their friends could raise enough money to purchase their release. He also begged that Captain Magrath would request the Nawab, to allow some of their number to descend to the river and draw water, as they were already suffering from thirst. The magistrate, in reply, said that he would consult the general with reference to their first request, and that he would speak to the Nawab concerning the second.

He accordingly left the goombuz and bent his way to the Nawab's tent. There he found that officer, a stout, fair, elderly gentleman, of venerable aspect, with a snowy beard, clad in simple white relieved by a rich gold waist-belt, with a plain steel-hilted sword laid handy by his side, reclining on cushions at his tent door, and resting after his morning's ride, the tent being pitched carelessly, well within the range of matchlock fire.

Upon seeing Captain Magrath the Nawab rose from his

cushions, and received him with that dignified courtesy which marks the old Deccan nobility, and after the usual inquiries concerning each other's health, the high contracting powers proceeded to the discussion of the matter in hand.

The Nawab offered no objection to the Pathan jemadar's proposal that the marauders should be allowed to surrender to the British authorities, if the general were minded to receive them, but he smilingly refused to allow them meanwhile to approach the river, or receive provisions from the town. He said that he intended to keep them closely beset until the arrival of a strong reinforcement, which he expected in a day or two, when, should they still prove stubborn, he would carry their position by storm; and slowly stroking his beard he added, with a soft and paternal smile, that in that case, "if it pleased God the gracious and merciful, he would *sauf kurro*" (or "*clean off*") "the whole of them, both old and young."

Then Captain Magrath, after the usual compliments, took his leave, and was about to mount his horse, when half-a-dozen cutthroats rushed up from the river, dragging with them a Rohilla boy of twelve or fourteen years of age, whose arms they had tied behind his back with a cummerbund. This youth had taken advantage of a moment, when the attention of the besiegers was distracted by the parley, to slip down to the river, where, lying on his face he had drunk his fill, and then fled across the shallow stream to the British border, whither he thought they would not dare to follow; but they nevertheless pursued and captured him, and now dragged him in triumph before the Nawab. His clothes had been torn in the struggle, and his brown skin showed through many a rent; it was plain, likewise, that he had been severely mauled, but he looked untamed and defiant as a lion's whelp, and when he saw the English officer, his eye lighted up, and he turned fiercely on his captors.

"Aha! ye misbegotten ones, ye who play with deceit, now ye shall let me go. I am the Sahib's prisoner. Am I not, my lord? They took me at your side of the river. Ye did, oh sons of swine! Ye whose mothers——" &c., &c.

"Be silent, oh shameless one!" said the magistrate; then turning to the Nawab:

"Yes, oh Nawab Sahib. It is true. I claim him as the prisoner of the Company Bahadur. He was taken on our ground, and I

am sure that an officer of your well-known wisdom and experience, and distinguished valour, will not keep him under those circumstances, even as we would not keep a prisoner who was captured on your side, without his Highness the Nizam ool moolk's warrant."

The Nawab at first demurred, whilst the boy's captors grasped their swords and twisted their moustaches as though they meant mischief, but the old gentleman at last yielded with a good grace to our friend's arguments, and the boy was handed over to one of the peons who had accompanied him, whilst the Rohillas who crowded the wall, and were blowing their matches preparatory to opening fire upon the camp, sent up a cheer as they saw him borne away in safety.

Captain Magrath, as soon as he had seen his captive across the river, lost no time in riding to the general's quarters and laying before him the proposal of the Rohilla chief. He said that if the general consented, he would march the band across and disarm them, and would be personally responsible for their good behaviour and safe custody. But the general did not see his way to accepting the responsibility of authorizing such a step. He said that these Rohillas, however gallant and picturesque, were without doubt marauders taken red-handed; that the Nizam's officer was but doing his duty to his government; and that he himself had received strict orders, to be very chary of interfering in such disputes. He therefore directed Captain Magrath to recross the river, and warn both the Nawab and the Rohillas, that if either party set foot within the limits of the British cantonment, they would be driven back by force.

Jaulnah was in those days perhaps the most favourite station in Southern India. Far away in the Mughali, beyond the range of red tape, whilst yet railways and telegraphs were not, all the necessities of life, including horseflesh, were cheap, and the poor subaltern's pay, owing to the difference of exchange between the Company's rupee and the local coinage, was enhanced some twenty per cent. In addition it was the sportsman's paradise. The tent club met every week within sight of the cantonment, and a blank day was never known; whilst within the same area, every kind of beast and bird, from a tiger to a quail, could be found by him who knew how to seek it. It was a brigade command, the force consisting of a battery of horse artillery, one

native cavalry and two native infantry regiments, to which later on was added a regiment of British infantry.

The cantonment was held by treaty from the Nizam, whose territory surrounded it on all sides, and that potentate's writ did not run within its bounds.

Captain Magrath then, after receiving the general's orders, re-crossed the river, and communicated them in the first instance to the Nawab, who received them with a grim smile. He then proceeded to the tomb, where he found the Rohillas eagerly awaiting him, and was at once admitted within the walls.

The jemadar and the head men received the message with evident disappointment, and Captain Magrath kindly advised them to submit to the Nawab, as resistance was hopeless, the besieging force outnumbering them by at least five to one.

"No," said the young chief proudly; "such is not our custom. We will never give up our arms to that scum of misbegotten ones. Sooner than do so we will die, sword in hand. Is it not so, brothers?"

And his men answered back, "Shahbash" (*It is well*). "We will die first."

Then Captain Magrath went his way sadly homewards, for he knew that this was no empty boast, and he was grieved for the brave men who were rushing upon certain death.

The day, however, passed over quietly, and up to sunset there came no sound of strife from across the river. At sunset, by the general's orders, a cavalry and an infantry picket were detached to patrol the roads, and capture any strangers who might break in.

At seven o'clock Captain Magrath betook himself to the cavalry mess. The night was still, and when mess was nearly over, dropping shots were heard from the direction of the tomb. These continued at intervals for a quarter of an hour or more, but no one heeded them, as all thought it was only one side or the other swaggering according to custom, and Captain Magrath said, that the Nawab was too wary an old soldier to throw away the advantage of his numbers by running his head against a stone wall in the dark. At last the firing ceased, but soon after, one of the Kotwal's peons came rushing in without ceremony, and addressing Captain Magrath cried out,

"Protector of the poor, the Rohillas have broken into the cantonment, and are looting the bazaar."

"Pooh ! nonsense ! " replied he. " They have something else to think of besides loot. Tell the Kotwal " (*the head of the police*) " to get all his men together at the Kotwālī. I'll be down in a minute," and rushing to his house and arming himself with a big stick, he mounted his horse and rode off to the scene of combat.

On his way he overtook the field officer of the day, bound on a like errand. The moon had just risen, and the street, save where the houses cast deep shadows across it, was almost as bright as day. There was no other light in the bazaar, for the shopkeepers had shut up their shops, and put out their lights at the first sound of battle, with a readiness born of long practice.

Close to the Kotwālī two victims of the fray were lying, one an Arab, whose lower jaw and tongue, with a portion of his upper jaw, had been shaved clean off by one stroke of a tulwar, but who was still breathing—a ghastly sight ; the other, a Rohilla, slashed all over with sword-cuts, bloody, but alive.

Leaving orders that the bodies should be taken to the Kotwālī the officers hurried on. Upon the outskirts of the bazaar other bodies were found, dead or wounded, twelve or fourteen in all. The officer in command of the cavalry picket was also lying on the ground ; for, meeting a Rohilla rushing towards the bazaar, he crossed swords with him and ordered him to surrender, instead of which, with a sudden upward stroke, the Rohilla cleft through the steel chin-strap of his headpiece, and struck him, stunned but happily unwounded, from his saddle.

This was how the affair began. The Rohillas had commenced the firing, either by accident or with a view to distract the attention of the besiegers ; if the latter were their design the step was an ill-advised one, for they only succeeded in rousing the watchfulness of the enemy. Then just before moonrise, when the night was at its darkest, the great gate leading to the river was thrown open, and forming a *gole*, or wedge (their favourite formation), they rushed across the stream, hotly pursued by the Arabs.

In an open space, about three hundred yards in breadth, between the river and the bazaar, the contending forces joined battle, and there many of both sides were slain ; but as soon as they saw the pickets advancing they all fled, the Arabs back across the river, taking their wounded and most of their dead with them, and the Rohillas to the bazaar, where they remained

quietly, till surrounded by the troops and the Kotwal's peons, to whom they surrendered without resistance.

Captain Magrath then gave orders that the wounded should be collected, and taken (as well as the prisoners) to the Kotwālī, and that the garrison surgeon should be summoned. The prisoners, wounded and unwounded, cried loudly for water; for fighting is thirsty work at best, and they had not drank all day. After their thirst was quenched they seemed resigned, and even content.

When the garrison surgeon arrived, he found the wounded laid out in rows on the floor, in the central hall of the Kotwālī—a low dark chamber, with a number of doors opening from it into other rooms, at one of which the prisoners could be seen clustering and watching his proceedings with eager curiosity, and whispered comments. Outside in the courtyard the moonlight shone upon the rows of dead; some lying stark and straight, others with features convulsed and hands clenched, in the attitude in which they had fallen.

The hall was dimly lighted by three spluttering oil lamps, and was crowded with the magistrate's peons, and personal attendants, whom the doctor promptly cleared out, sending some of them to the bazaar for candles and torches, so that he might have light wherewith to do his ghastly work.

The wounds, though for the most part clean cut by the sharp keen tulwars, looked, some of them at least, most desperate.

One handsome youngster of two or three and twenty had his elbow-joint laid open, and a terrible slash through his shoulder-blade to boot. He bore without wincing and without a groan, the long and painful process of sewing up these wounds, and when Captain Magrath kindly asked him if he felt easier, and whether he had any other hurt, he smiled, and undoing the cummerbund which he had wound tightly round him to stop the bleeding, he showed another fearful cut beneath his waist, which had only failed by a hairsbreadth to penetrate the abdomen.

The Arab whose jaws had been shaved off so skilfully was dead, but his adversary was still breathing, though insensible. A sword-cut had cleft his skull, and the doctor removed three pieces of bone which were pressing on the brain. Besides many other sword-cuts he had been shot in divers places, no less than four bullets being extracted.



The wounded were removed in doolies to the garrison hospital, as their wounds were dressed, but Captain Magrath suggested, that this poor fellow should be allowed to die in peace where he lay. The doctor however said, that he *might* recover his senses before death, in which case, he would from the nature of his wounds, suffer acute pain, and that he would therefore prefer to keep him under his eye; so he was laid upon a blanket and carried off by the hospital bearers.

The summer night was nigh spent before the last of the wounded was removed. Some were mere boys, but all bore their tortures without a murmur, and expressed the greatest gratitude for the care which was being bestowed upon them.

Next day the Nawab wrote and claimed the prisoners, but the general replied that he must first take the orders of the Resident at Hyderabad (some 250 miles away), to whom an express had been despatched that morning.

In the course of a few days came the Resident's reply, directing that the prisoners should be made over to the Nizam's *Subadar* (or superintendent of the district) at Old Jaulnah, a town close by, to be by him dealt with according to law (?).

The prisoners on hearing this unwelcome news were at first much cast down, but they soon recovered their cheerfulness. They said that it was their *kismut*, and they accepted it without grumbling.

Every one was sorry for them; they had been so gay and good-humoured, grateful for the kind treatment which they had received, cracking jokes with their jailors and with each other, and eating their food with appetite and thankfulness.

When Captain Magrath came to hand them over to the Nizam's authorities, the jemadar took him aside, and begged that two or three boys who belonged to the party might be set at liberty, and that officer, without consulting the general (who might possibly have thought it his duty to refuse, if the matter were brought officially before him), at once agreed, and giving them a farewell meal and a few rupees each, he let them slip away that night.

The jemadar then begged as a great favour, that Captain Magrath would take charge of their arms and money. He said, and with truth, that the Nizam's people would strip them of all they possessed, and that even should they be proved innocent, they would never see their property again.

A respectable soucar, or native banker, was accordingly sent for, who took a list in duplicate of the arms, money and valuables. One of these lists was given to the jemadar, and another to the magistrate, and the soucar took the property away.

Then the prisoners (the wounded excepted) were handed over to the Nizam's officer, who came with a body of horse to receive them, and marched them away in chains.

The jemadar, as spokesman, expressed their gratitude to Captain Magrath for all his kindness. He said that their fates were at present adverse, but there was no use in complaining; that they were in the hands of God, who alone knew what their destiny would be, but that whatever should befall them they would strive to bear it like men. They trusted that their fate would be propitious, and that they would again have the honour of basking in the sunshine of his Highness's favour—and so they went their way.

About the wounded Captain Magrath said nothing. They were entered as ordinary patients upon the hospital books, and as each one recovered and was dismissed hospital, he was taken before the magistrate. His arms, the tools of his trade, were returned to him; he received a fatherly exhortation to be of good conduct for the future, and a couple of rupees if he was destitute, and was bidden to go in peace. They all expressed regret at parting, and said that they would fain eat the Company's salt for the future, instead of leading their present precarious lives.

Now this was an irregular proceeding, especially on the part of a magistrate—no less than the compounding of felony, or the being an accessory after the fact—and the moral gorge of the law-abiding reader will doubtless have risen at the recital. But then he has possibly never lived in Bohemia, which is nevertheless a pleasant country, and very like the Mughali.

All the wounded recovered after a longer or shorter interval; even the man whom the magistrate had given over, regained his senses within a week, though he was not dismissed hospital for several months.

After these days came the Mutiny, and the merry station of Jaulnah was broken up. Captain Magrath was ordered to Mhow, from thence to Burmah, from thence to Cananore, and finally back to Jaulnah in the end of 1858, after that station had

been reoccupied. One day he was sitting in court when his orderly peon came in and made obeisance.

"Protector of the poor," said he, "three Pathans crave an audience of the *Huzoor*" (*the presence*).

"What do they want?"

"The name of my lord is great, and is known far and wide. His *ikhbāl* is propitious. They desire to pay their respects to the Presence."

"All right; let them come in."

The orderly, bowing low went out, and speedily returning, ushered in three Rohillas. One was a tall, heavily-bearded man, about thirty-five years of age; a second was considerably younger, and looked pale and emaciated, as if after long sickness; the third was seemingly an attendant, or man of lower rank.

They saluted in a frank soldier-like manner, presenting their sheathed swords held horizontally in both hands. The magistrate touched the hilts, then touched his forehead with his fingertips, and looking carelessly at the men, said:

"Well, what can I do for you? Have you been getting into any trouble?"

"No, my lord," replied the younger man, smiling. "Not this time. But your Highness has forgotten me. Do you not remember Rhyman Khan, and the fight at the goombuz, and how you gave up me and my men, by order of the Sircar, to the Subadar of Old Jaulnah, upon whom be curses."

"Oh, to be sure; I'm glad to see you back alive. Well, what did they do to you? You don't look as if you had had a very gay time of it."

"No, my lord. Our fate was an evil one, but it was the will of God. For two years they kept us without trial chained in a dungeon, in such misery that but for the protection of the merciful God not one of us would be alive this day. After that, our treatment was a little better, and at last we were tried and found guilty, and sentenced to two years' imprisonment, but his Highness Salar Jung, the Mookhtiar ool moolk, was pleased to remit the punishment, in consideration of our long imprisonment, and the misery which we had undergone. This," turning to the elder man, "is my brother. If he had been with us when we fought that Arab rabble, we should have had another tale to tell. I was too young, and hadn't enough experience, for I was only

in temporary command of the party. My brother had gone away on some business, and was unable to rejoin us before we were beset."

"Oh," said the brother apologetically, "he didn't do so badly for a boy. He didn't make such a bad fight of it, my lord."

"No, I don't think he did. What would you have done yourself?" asked Captain Magrath.

"Well, I would have stayed quiet, and not fired on the Nawab and drawn his attention. We would either have slipped down quietly into the river bed whilst it was dark and got away, or we would have gone straight for the Nawab's tent in the last watch of the night and cut our way through, sword in hand. Those Arabs cannot face a Pathan, my lord," said he proudly.

After some further conversation, the young man turned to Captain Magrath and said politely,

"Before we receive permission to depart from the Presence, will my lord order that the arms and property, which he was so kind as to take charge of, should be returned to his servant? This," said he, producing a faded and almost illegible paper from a little bag in his waist-belt, "is the list which your Highness caused to be given me by the soucar."

Poor Captain Magrath's "heart became like water," as the Hindoos say. Till that moment he had utterly forgotten that the property had been consigned to his care. He could not put his hand upon the memorandum which he had made at the time. The station had been broken up meanwhile. He had forgotten the soucar's name; possibly he was dead or bankrupt; possibly his shop had been looted in the troubles—and here were these poor fellows come back after all their years of suffering, with the most perfect and touching confidence in the word and honour of a British officer, never for a moment deeming that there would be the slightest doubt or difficulty in recovering their little valuables, and above all their arms. There was nothing to be done, however, but to put a bold face upon it, and to trust that the police knew more about the matter than he.

"Kotwal," he cried in a voice of authority.

"Kodāwund?" replied that haughty official, bowing low.

"Go to the bazaar at once, and bring before me the soucar who took charge of Rhyman Khan Sahib's property in 1855. See that all the articles be brought into court without delay. Upon your head be it that nothing is missing."

"*Jo hookum*" (*it is the order*), replied the Kotwal promptly, and calling one of his duffadars he went out.

"Now, gentlemen," said Captain Magrath, "you have permission to retire for the present. I have some government business to transact. Will you be seated in the verandah meanwhile, and when the Kotwal returns I shall send for you."

The Rohillas returned thanks, saluted, and went off smiling.

Half-an-hour passed—three-quarters—but no sign of the Kotwal. Poor Captain Magrath felt as if he were going to be hanged, whilst thinking of all the odds which were against the soucar's being discovered, and of the disappointment of those poor bandits who had trusted him.

At last, after more than an hour's delay, four sturdy hammals staggered into court, laden with arms and other spoils, and with them the soucar, alive and hearty. The lists were carefully gone over, and not a grain of powder or a slow match was found wanting.

Half-a-dozen other Rohillas of the gang came swaggering in, pale and emaciated, but very merry—the main body having gone on to Aurungabad.

They expressed not the least surprise that everything was handed over intact, for they had never doubted that it would be so.

The jemadar gave a receipt for the property, and they went on their way rejoicing, but none of them was half so glad as Captain Magrath, whose relief at seeing them march off with the sinews and weapons of war, doubtless before long to engage in fresh broils, and to shed fresh blood, was sincere and very great—but this, as I have said, was in the Mughali.

S. T. HEARD.

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### Disillusioned.

"And you shall see how the Devil spends  
A fire God gave for other ends!"

R. BROWNING.

"HALLO, Hugh, my boy! Didn't know you were in town," said Charlie Browton, shaking hands with the man he thus greeted so cheerily.

"No; I only came up this morning, just for a peep at society." And Hugh Trevor sank lazily into a comfortable chair and proceeded leisurely to roll up a cigarette, for they were in the smoking-room of the "Pythian," one of those many new clubs

built for the *jeunesse dorée*, in which luxury and comfort are certainly to be found the one aim of such buildings.

"Going to any theatre this evening?" inquired Charlie. "We should be just in time for the burlesque at the Gaiety."

"No, thanks, old fellow. I am due at Mr. Tryndle's ball this evening, and I feel too decidedly comfortable to turn out before."

"Old Tryndle's hop! Oh, I am going there too, but I shan't look in till nearly one, and then only stay a short time. Hate the fag. You are never going for the whole thing?" said Charlie, looking almost aghast at the appalling notion of having to be at any function for more than a quarter of an hour, unless it were at a burlesque. "But I forgot: he is the great 'boss' in your parts; you've got to do the civil, I suppose. Well, ta-ta, old chap. See you to-night again; if not, look me up. Ta-ta!" And Charlie Browton went off, gay as usual, his fair, clean-shaven face always the picture of health and happy spirits. He seemed one of those fortunate mortals on whom sad care had laid her hands but gently—perhaps she had never as yet touched him.

Hugh Trevor remained in his seat, apparently leisurely thinking as he watched the light smoke from his cigarette. He was a very different man to the friend who had just left him, even in looks. Almost black hair which waved close to his head, a moustache considerably lighter than his hair, a strongly-marked face with determination predominate in the square-set chin, it would have been a hard face but for the grey eyes which looked out so kindly and honestly on the world. He gave one the idea of a soldier; but the service did not rank him. He was only a country squire, not overburdened with wealth, but trying to farm his own land, which in these days of agricultural depression is by no means a brilliant success; but he had managed to keep his head up where others had gone under, having a little private money which assisted him considerably.

Hugh could not help thinking of Charlie Browton with his bright, happy-go-lucky ways, and almost wished himself of the same temperament. For with Hugh life was a more serious affair; he had none of that *blasé* cynicism which the young men about town affect in order to show their deep knowledge of human nature, and how much everything in consequence bored them; the old beliefs in simplicity and innocence were still realities to him. He was by no means of the namby-pamby style, but had



a breadth of his own, and though no doubt it was foolish of him, as his opinions often evoked laughter, nevertheless those who laughed respected him, though they shook their heads and declared he would one day be well deceived. With this faith in human nature he believed the girl he loved the embodiment of all those beautiful charms which he thought every nice woman must possess.

In his smoke he seemed to see a pretty flower-face, set round with golden hair which curled lightly over her forehead, while the lifting of her long-lashed eyelids revealed a pair of very blue eyes which could look anything the owner wished. It was a fair, child-like face, which made one think that the soul which peeped through the eyes must be as yet hardly awakened : in reality she was about twenty-two, but looked seventeen. Daisy Carryl was only young in years ; her youthful face masked a young woman who very well knew the worth of most things, and of herself in particular—thanks to the teaching of her sister, Mrs. Vincent, who, having married for money and what it brought, had instilled the same high principles into her younger sister's mind, who proved a very apt pupil, being the possessor of a heart which would never be the cause of any anxiety, so thoroughly and regularly did it seem to beat to the dictates of her mind. This was Daisy Carryl, whom Hugh Trevor seemed to see in the midst of smoke from his cigarette. Like the honest fellow he was, he could believe no wrong of his love. He had often heard her discussed by his men friends, many of whom had suggested she was an arrant flirt, but that what little heart she had would be given to the highest bidder, though till that one appeared she was ready to draw any small fly into her net for her own amusement. Such a speech Hugh repudiated as utterly unworthy ; her pretty little ways were only the outcome of a simple, child-like nature—such a contrast to the artificiality of the women of the world ; and in his rough honesty Hugh said as much to those who had made such disparaging remarks on his divinity, but it only made them shrug their shoulders.

"Poor chap! He is evidently very smitten ; he is much too good for her to play with. He is actually simple enough to believe in her."

All this had happened in the previous autumn, when Daisy had gone to make a long visit to a married cousin living in the same part of Hampshire as Hugh Trevor, and as he was a

frequent visitor at the house he had many opportunities of seeing the bewitching Miss Carryl, who soon had him fast in the toils of her fascinations. Poor Hugh, knowing very little of women and their ways, believed her face, and credited her with all the charms his fancy could devise. Daisy was immensely pleased at having this rather good-looking man so very much in love; it was so amusing to draw him out. When her best moods were on her she could not help wishing that he were the rich man, he was so decidedly good to look at; but love in a cottage, or rather in a dull manor house, was certainly not her *métier*; in the meantime a little harmless amusement would help to pass the otherwise rather monotonous days. Sometimes his honest eyes made her feel uncomfortable, especially when he spoke of those women who would barter their very souls for wealth; but she would shake off any momentary uncomfortableness by thinking that she was not as bad as that, and really, the man must have lived in Arcadia to have such ideas as to imagine that a woman should marry for love only. Some fools did, but she was wiser. Daisy Carryl was an orphan, sufficiently well off to be comfortable, but she longed for the luxuries of a good establishment, and such was her aim, assisted by her sister.

Before leaving Hampshire she had drifted into a kind of engagement to Hugh Trevor; the fact was, she found it difficult to do otherwise, but she insisted on its being kept to themselves, as her sister would never hear of such a match. Hugh submitted with a very bad grace.

"I am not rich, Daisy, dear," he said, surveying her daintily-clad figure, "but I have enough for us to be happy upon."

"As if I care whether you are rich or not," said Daisy, looking up at him with her blue eyes, in which he seemed to see only truth shining, but she thought, with an inward shrug, of his old manor house and of the monotony of a country life.

"Daisy, darling, what shall I do without you? and you say it would be useless to speak to your sister?" said Hugh the evening before she left.

"Quite useless, dear, especially as she has written to say we are off south for the winter."

"Off south for the winter!" repeated Hugh in a dreary voice, as the outlook on coming desolate months was anything but cheering. "You did not tell me that before, Daisy."

"No, dear, it was not quite settled ; but don't look so dull—I am not going to the other side of the world. The spring will soon be here again ; besides, you will have the hunting soon. You won't miss me much then !" and Daisy emphasized her teasing words with a coquettish look from out of her long-fringed eyes.

"You don't know how I care for you or you would not talk like that," said Hugh almost roughly. "Daisy, don't play with me ; I know I am only a heavy fellow beside you, my darling, and feel I am almost daring too much in asking you to give yourself to me ; but, if a man truly loves, he has a right to try and gain the love he craves. Daisy, be true to me, for I have given you my heart most wholly—my life is worthless without you," and Hugh, taking her face between his hands, gazed into it, as if loth to lose one feature, then kissed her tenderly, almost reverently, on her lips and left her.

Daisy felt subdued after his farewell. All the better part of her nature had been stirred by his simple expression of love, and she almost tried to imagine at the moment that his honest love would be sufficient for her. She wondered what there was in her to draw forth such devotion ; what she had only meant for flirtation he had taken for the real thing, and here she had drifted into an engagement the end of which she did not quite foresee. Why did she not let him go ? What object was there in keeping him ? Perhaps the truth was that what little heart she had had been touched by him, and she cared more for his good opinion than she would like to have owned. Anyhow, there was no harm done, she thought ; he would not speak till he had her permission ; they were going away for the winter, so she would not be bothered with his constantly coming up to town. She would write him chatty letters, yes, only chatty ones, be a little reserved in affectionate expressions ; then, perhaps, he would get tired of the long waiting. So, satisfying herself with these thoughts, she dismissed uncomfortable reflections, while *chiffons* soon occupied their place.

In this spirit she went to Nice, where she thoroughly enjoyed herself in several new flirtations ; the men and women there knew that art well and were not so simple as Hugh, to whom the intricacies of flirtation were as a sealed book.

Daisy returned with her sister for the London season, and of course Hugh Trevor very promptly came up to see her, but she

gave him no chance of a *tête-à-tête*, as she particularly did not want to be troubled by having to make any promises, for at last there had appeared no less a person than Mr. Tryndle, a reputed millionaire, who seemed to bid fair to become a constant visitor at their house. Her sister, Mrs. Vincent, was a clever hand in enticing people to come and see her in a quiet way, for she knew well that more is done in a quiet way than with all the most lavish entertainments. Therefore Hugh called and was more than disappointed at not finding Daisy alone ; he tried staying on, but Mrs. Vincent had heard a little about the farmer, as she called him, and she did not desire he should have any advantages just then, as his good looks labelled him dangerous. Poor Hugh thought it a bit hard that Daisy had not managed to give him a few moments, and the only happy remembrance he had to take back was a pretty little deprecating look she gave him when he held her hand a minute longer than is strictly necessary. He thought she could not guess the longing that possessed him to take her in his arms after such a long absence—and to get only a cold little shake of the hand ! Truly Hugh did not understand women.

"Mr. Trevor is a great friend of yours, Daisy, isn't he?" said Mrs. Vincent casually, after he had left.

"I don't know about great friends. I saw a good deal of him in the autumn ; he is rather amusing," answered Daisy, lazily reclining in a chair, as she fanned herself quietly.

"Amusing !" returned Mrs. Vincent, lifting her eyebrows, "he struck me as being anything but that. But then a country fellow has only two subjects : the weather and the crops. Perhaps you mean he helped you to amuse yourself ; he is decidedly good-looking, with nothing beyond, I expect."

"Well, he did enliven the time a bit, as he has not the ghost of an idea of how to flirt ; I was trying to teach him," laughed Daisy.

"A rather dangerous amusement, especially with a man like that ; he would not understand the game. I hope he is not coming for any lessons in town. A poor manor house in Hampshire is not quite what you intend, I suppose ?"

"Hardly !" answered Daisy, with a slightly amused smile. "I don't think I am quite cut out for the *rôle* of making both ends meet ; that is not exactly my idea of bliss. Still, it's a pity he has nothing beyond his looks."

"My dear Daisy, if you begin to waste your sympathy on him

I shall imagine that your amusement was a little more than a game," for Mrs. Vincent fancied she heard a slight sigh.

"You need not disturb your mind; no damage was done."

So said Daisy, though in her own mind she was beginning to dread when she must tell this countryman that she could not be happy in a life such as he could offer, and yet with the variability of her nature she kept putting off the time; the moral courage necessary for making the confession was wanting, as her pride would suffer in being compelled to lower herself in the eyes of one who held her in such high esteem. It positively annoyed her to think he should have such old-fashioned notions; ideas such as his were all exploded. He ought to know that it is the essential duty of a girl to make a good match, and he decidedly was anything but a *bon parti*. Ah! how she regretted those dull days at her cousin's; they had to answer for her drifting into this uncomfortable position.

"Why can't I be good, like those slow colourless girls one knows? To have to live up to Hugh's exalted idea of a woman would simply irritate me; I should be bored and he would be quickly disillusioned. How could I go and hide myself in the country? I can't exist without excitement. I should simply stagnate!" and she looked at herself in the long cheval glass, which reflected back a charming little figure clad in some soft material of palest sea green, in which curiously shaded orchids were laid in a careless artistic fashion, proclaiming at once the work of the very best order. She gazed at herself with pleasure, for she knew her gown would create envy among many of her friends. To be the best dressed woman in a room is positive happiness to most women; to achieve which distinction requires both taste and money. Daisy had scarcely finished her satisfactory review of herself when her maid re-entered with an exquisite posy composed entirely of orchids matching those on her gown.

"Mr. Tryndle's man brought these, miss, with a note."

Daisy took the flowers with a careless air, though their very beauty made her give a sigh of pleasure. After reading the note a curious expression came into her face, and she stood and looked at the flowers which were already one of the links in the chain that fate was binding round her.

"Daisy! what exquisite flowers! my dear, who sent them?" exclaimed Mrs. Vincent, coming into the room.

"Oh, Mr. Tryndle," answered Daisy in a would-be careless manner, though a slight accent of exultation was discernible.

"Daisy, don't pretend such nonchalance. Here is Mr. Tryndle, the most desirable match of the season, thinking seriously of you. I am sure you have only to be careful how you play your cards, for he knows perfectly well he has but to throw the handkerchief and there are many to pick it up, and only too glad to do so."

"It is such a pity he is so—florid, so very *nouveau riche*!" said Daisy, as for a moment she seemed to see Hugh's grey eyes pleading, but she quickly shook off that remembrance; sentiment had no place in Daisy's composition, or rather she had never cultivated any such unfortunate feeling. Love to her was only a sentiment, not a reality. She had not learned the desolation of a loveless life, and she perhaps would never understand it completely.

"A man with thirty thousand pounds a year can afford to be florid," answered Mrs. Vincent, who certainly had no sympathy with such very girlish notions. She was anxious this affair should be soon settled, and she was hoping much from the ball to-night given by Mr. Tryndle, and to which they were invited.

Seldom had Daisy looked so well as she did this evening; she was quite the centre of a bevy of young men soliciting for dances, which she gave with equal discrimination. Somehow a whisper had got afloat that Mr. Tryndle more than admired the pretty Miss Carryl, and this fact heightened the usual admiration which was always her share. If a rich man considered her more than attractive the *cachet* of his opinions had risen her in the estimation of others, and Daisy Carryl found herself quite the rage that evening. In a turn of the dance Daisy thought she recognized a well-known soldierly-looking figure leaning against the door; at first she imagined it was fancy, but looking again she saw it was Hugh. No happiness came into her heart at the sight; she had not expected to see him.

"How annoying!" she thought. "Why didn't he let me know he was coming? I suppose he intended a pleasant surprise, but like many surprises it is rather the reverse." But no trace of annoyance was visible on her face; she chatted and laughed with her partner, and appeared utterly unconscious of the presence of the figure in the doorway, though she could almost feel he had left his post and was wending his way towards her.



"How do you do, Miss Carryl? Am I too late for a dance?" said Hugh as he stood before her.

"Oh! how do you do, Mr. Trevor? I am surprised to see you here. You are only just in time. I can give you No. 13—it is a waltz," she answered, carefully keeping her card to herself, hoping he would be content with the one.

"Thank you; but haven't you another, Daisy? I can't be satisfied with only one," he added in a low tone, as he noticed her partner was not listening. "I have so much to tell you, dear."

"Let me see—then No. 17; and these are the only two," she said with a little upward look, as if to say she would have given more were it possible.

"Well, I suppose I must be content, but it's a very grudging content, Daisy, be——"

Here Daisy's partner turned and claimed her attention, so Hugh perforce had to bow himself away and return to his lounging position, from whence he could gaze on that dear little figure dancing in and out among the crowd. Seeing the dance finished he wandered off in search of a quiet corner, as there was yet another dance before his with Daisy, and somehow he did not care to dance with any other girl before. He found a fairy-like nook made for either *tête-à-tête* or solitary meditation, a luxuriously comfortable seat into which he threw himself and soon wandered off into dreamland, in which Daisy played a very prominent part. He was brought back to everyday life by hearing her name spoken by two men on the other side of the palms, which, though thick and sheltering, hid the speakers, but they spoke sufficiently loud that Trevor could not help overhearing.

"Do you know, old chap, they say the betting is on old Tryndle offering his heart and moneys to the pretty Miss Carryl?"

"No, really, by Jove! but I heard she was engaged to a chap in the country," drawled the second speaker.

"Well, you don't suppose she will give up old Tryndle for a chap in the country? Not she! unless she is an exception to most young women. The man in the country will have to go to the wall as usual. Tryndle isn't much to look at—they only give a glance at the man while their eye rests on the money, and *that* gilds anything, you know."

"Yas-as, I suppose it does. Lucky chap to have the gilding; I wish I had a little of it. Had a fearful week at Ascot—stone

broke," and the speaker wandered off into conversation about certain sporting matters, whilst Hugh sat as if stupefied at what he had heard. Distinct thought could not be evolved from the conflicting emotions he was feeling; the one thought, "Daisy is false—my Daisy!" seemed to ring with a perpetual ding-dong in his ear. He put up his hand to his head as if to chase away the ugly idea that would present itself. It must have been a dream; his Daisy false for one moment, oh! impossible. Young men are always ready to gossip about pretty girls and impute low motives to their love of admiration. She was certainly bright and fascinating, for had she not enthralled him completely. Why should not Mr. Tryndle be captivated also and wish to pay her greater attentions than to other young women less favoured than she? But that Daisy would be false to her engagement, he would not think it. With all his brave faith gallantly struggling to the front, hideous doubt would come with its mocking suggestion that old Tryndle was a match that any woman who loved the good things of earth might be tempted to make. Did he not know that there are women who would sell their very souls for such things—why should she resist more than another?

"Pah! away with such thinking; she said she would be true, and I will believe her true till she tells me she is false, and then——" The sweet strains of a waltz came softly stealing to him, and remembering that this was his dance with Daisy he quickly made his way to the ball-room, where he found her talking brightly with Mr. Tryndle.

"Miss Carryl, our dance."

With a laughing adieu to her former partner, Daisy laid her hand on Hugh's arm. Looking up, she noticed that his face looked pale in spite of the tan, and that the happy look had somehow gone out of his eyes. It foreboded no good, and she feared that the dreaded explanation would have to be given. If she only could ward it off she would certainly write next day.

"Daisy, sit this out, will you? I have something I want to say to you," and before she could give an answer one way or another Hugh had taken her determinedly, as it were, to a quiet room, where they could talk undisturbed.

"You don't look as if you were enjoying yourself, Hugh," said Daisy, laughing at him, and bent upon breaking a curious silence which seemed to have fallen on them.

"I was at first. The mere pleasure of seeing you again, darling, was enough, but—something happened which has made me feel wretched. Daisy, do you really love?" He came nearer, and would have taken her in his arms, but she quietly manœuvred to prevent it, without exactly appearing to do so.

"What a serious old Hugh! Of course I like you," said Daisy, tapping her hand with her fan. What could she do to get rid of him? If Mr. Tryndle came in at some critical moment it might prove an awkward scene.

"Like!" echoed Hugh in a quick tone. "I don't want your liking. You can like a dog, but I want your love, your real, honest love. Daisy, what is it that seems to be coming like a shadow between us? Just now you evaded me. Such would not have happened before."

"No, really! but I couldn't have my gown crumpled," said Daisy in an exasperating way, her temper rising slightly.

"You can't care much for me if your gown is of so much more importance than my feelings," answered Hugh quickly, though in a dull tone, as of passion kept under by pure force of will, while his face had grown white. Then with a change of tone he said, "Daisy, don't let us quarrel. I am wretched enough; for one moment I doubted you. They say that you will marry Mr. Tryndle, and that for his money. Daisy, it's not true; say it's not true!" And his breath came quickly as he leant forward in his eagerness to hear her denial. But none came.

"It is true," said Daisy in a slow, hard voice, not daring to look at the man she had wronged, and whose white face must ever be a bitter memory to her.

Hugh drew himself up, clenched his hands tight to prevent himself from giving way to laughter, to which he felt he must on account of the devil's passion rising in him at the sight of this fair face which had proved so false.

"I ought to have known it—wealth *versus* a poor country squire. You are only doing what most women do. I suppose I must offer you my congratulations on the excellent match you are making."

The cold sneering tones hurt Daisy's shallow soul more than the most severe words could have done. For the moment she hated herself for the part she had played; her newly-acquired position was not to be bought without some shame.

"I can't ask you to forgive me, Hugh. I should never have married you ; I could not have stood the stagnation of your dull life. I have wronged you by not telling you sooner," said Daisy, not really knowing what to say in her endeavours to put an end to the scene.

"Country life is stagnation for a woman who has no soul beyond gowns and diamonds. I don't blame you ; I ought to thank you for saving me a life of misery, but at present I can't quite, though the Daisy I loved was a different woman to the one who bears that name. I only trust your bargain will not be disappointing. Let me take you back. My God ! Daisy, how can women have such hearts to sell themselves for merely the goods of the earth ? What are you made of ?"

His bitter low tone thrilled her to the heart, though she affected no movement, and slowly together they entered the ball-room. None seeing them enter could guess the drama that had been enacted between them.

"Good-bye," said Hugh without looking at her. Then in a lower tone, "God forgive your treachery ; I can't."

With a bow he left the room and soon the house, his mind in such a tumult that he walked on without quite knowing where he was going, till suddenly he found he had wandered far from his rooms. He wended his way back. All his dreams were shattered, his faith in women utterly destroyed in one blow, and he felt out of heart with the world. This girl, in whose truth he so thoroughly believed, had ruthlessly spoilt his life and ruined his happiness, for he knew that though the wound would heal in time, yet none other would gain the love he had so recklessly squandered. The Daisy to whom he had given his heart had been enshrined and looked upon with reverent eyes. Now the veil was torn away, and he saw a soulless being who could barter herself as they bartered slaves in the market ; the world would certainly approve and say she had done a wise thing, for the worship of mammon is its highest creed. But Hugh—well, like many another he had only been awakened from a sweet dream to face reality and disillusion.

R. M. BURNAND.

### In the Ardennes.

THERE were two of us, and we had hesitated for some time whether our holiday should be spent in Norway or in the

Ardennes. Every one went to Norway, I said, and then there was the sea passage, confessed by the most enthusiastic to be a bad one. We could wander at our own sweet will, too, I argued, in the Ardennes, and by-and-by the enterprising Great Eastern Railway will have lured the tourist fiend to this new hunting-ground, and its charm will be gone! My friend agreed to this last proposition, and we started for Antwerp, *vid* Harwich: we gave ourselves three weeks.

Antwerp we had seen before, and we did not fancy Brussels. I had just spent a month in Paris, and Brussels struck me as being a secondhand edition of that gay city. The soldiery were out in the streets, too, on our day there; there was a great deal of noise, and it was very hot. We did not admire the Belgian military, and the first *vivandière* I ever saw gave me a shock I was some time in getting over. My idea of *vivandières* was based on the ones I had seen at fancy balls, and this woman was plain-looking and tramped along with a man's step and a cold indifference of aspect that certainly had no trace of the *coquetterie* and *espièglerie* usually associated with her rôle. She was not like one of Ouida's *vivandières* at all.

We went to the Cathedral, first having lunch in a restaurant near; but Brussels Cathedral is of no particular note, and we hesitated about visiting the famous Wiertz Gallery. Some one had particularly told us we must go; but a few photographs of the pictures, seen by chance in an arcade, decided me that nothing earthly should induce me to visit these works of art. I understand they are called works of art, and possibly my ideas of art are limited and crude. As my friend had no desire for a walk something under two miles, the gallery was given up, and we went back to the hotel.

Strange to say we had no burning desire to see Waterloo, and we left for Namur next day, intending to go to Dinant by the boat, which a guide-book had told us "left the quay every morning at nine." To err is, however, human, and the guide-book erred. Every morning, after a certain date in May, the boat did leave the quay, but next morning was a week before that favoured date. We left Namur by train; it is scarcely worth more than a day's visit, and its hotel was extremely expensive.

Dinant was really the first stopping place in the Ardennes that filled us with enthusiasm. We had been told we would "enthuse,"

as the Americans say, over the Meuse scenery when we went up by the steamer ; but then we did not go up by the steamer, and from the train we saw nothing to call forth particular rapture. In fact I may as well state frankly here that any one going to the Ardennes intent on so-called "scenery" had much better stay in his native island, and go to the Western Highlands.

The natives calmly assure you, "Ah! there is nothing like this in England" (meaning Britain), and to tell them the contrary is a waste of breath. They shake their heads with unconvinced and calm conceit. "Why do you come so far, then?" they think, and it would be useless to explain. Charms there are in plenty, but so-called "scenery"—"a leetle, not mooch."

Dinant, however, rewarded us.

The sun was shining brightly on the Meuse, dimpling and sparkling on the river's rapid flow, and all along the river front was a line of houses painted in a diversity of colour, pink, white, salmon-coloured and blue, that gave a most charming and original effect. When we crossed the bridge from the station, the church, with its oddly-shaped tower—the guide-book calls it "pumpkin-shaped"—was before us, and the frowning grey rock of the citadel. There are no soldiers in the citadel, though a waiter told us, with calm mendacity, that there were a hundred. When reproached afterwards for his slight lapse from the truth, he seemed not one whit abashed. "*C'est plus joli pour la ville*," was all he said, with a cool effrontery that seemed to say, "What is truth before patriotism? Would you have me lower Dinant in the estimation of the English?" We began to think we had been rather foolish to correct him ; patriotism is a virtue, however you look at it.

Dinant is very quiet, at least it is quiet in May. The guide-book had told us that, and it also informed us that "nothing broke the stillness but the old world rumble of the diligence." I was always listening for that "old world rumble," but when I did see the diligence the rumble sounded very like that of a 'bus in the Strand, and I felt aggrieved. Not far from the village—I beg its pardon, *la ville*—is the castle of Crève Cœur, which stands above a tiny "dead village" called Bouvignes. Once Bouvignes was the rival of Dinant, and mustered its fifteen thousand men ; but Bouvignes seems to have been aggressive and fond of swagger, and it paid the penalty of these pleasant vices. Actually ven-



turing to brave King Henry II. of France, it suffered siege, and with Dinant, which had made the extraordinary statement that it would "roast the royal heart, with the besieging duke's, for breakfast," it was burnt and its people butchered. I suppose the remnant left in both towns sang small for some time. Crève Cœur, of course, has its legend. It is complete in that respect. And still in Bouvignes Church, on the 8th day of July, mass is said for the souls of *les dames de Crève Cœur*, three brave and beautiful ladies, who, after the castle fell to the conquerors, threw themselves from the battlements into the river rather than be humiliated by the French. Considering the affectionate intentions of their brothers and husbands towards the besiegers, they perhaps acted with discretion.

On the other side of the river from Crève Cœur there is a softly wooded height, whence a very charming view of the Meuse and Dinant can be gained. Here we spent one afternoon, while the little town took its siesta, and we had chosen a seat near one of the iron crucifixes which abound. This one was rather weather-beaten, and the tiny bouquets of daisies and speedwell which some loving hand had fastened under the sacred feet were hanging their heads and fading. While we were there a gay little Belgian mother and three children mounted the hill slowly, talking and laughing, and then the little mother fell on her knees by the cross, and began to tell her beads, after a few futile efforts to draw the small Catholics down beside her. The little boys were devout enough, and murmured a faint *Ave*, with occasional glances at us; but the girl was a veritable *méchante*, as her mother called her. She wriggled and laughed, and destroyed all chance of her brothers' gravity, and finally the poor little *mère*, after an irate, "*Va, méchante*," in the very midst of her paternoster, had to rise from her knees. And after that, if I am to be believed, the *méchante* ran back and tossed her flimsy impertinence of a parasol on the cross, and when it was handed to her severely by L——, went off with a fluent defiance which we did not understand.

"That child would have danced on the altar of Notre Dame when they crowned Liberty there," L—— said. "If she had lived at the Revolution, Robespierre would have found her extremely useful."

No one else came up to the little lonely crucifix; we left it when the sky was full of a tender gold—one of Tennyson's "daf-

fodil skies"—and the black cross stood out dark against it, like the story of its own tragic crime, with the peace and glory of heaven beyond. Our patriot waiter always made tender inquiry as to where we had been, and he insisted that next day we should visit the Dinant Grotto, which is really worth seeing, though in comparison with the famous ones at Han it fades into insignificance. We spent five days at Dinant. The lilac, white and lavender, was in its glory; it grew everywhere, and there were great posies before the shrines in the Cathedral and in all the little chapels, and there were even some roses out in the gardens, and whole rows of pansies, purple and gold, seemed to smile at us with their sweet faces and pansy grace; but at the fifth day we thought it time to go on, so we bought a few mementoes, tiny crucifixes and rosaries, the famous Dinant *coques* (a kind of gingerbread baked hard as a brick), and some photographs, and we told the waiter to secure seats in the diligence next day for Rochefort.

We were quite sorry to leave Dinant when we said good-bye to it that evening, and took a last stroll by the river, where a priest passed us, intent on his breviary. The sun was setting, and the gay, variegated colours of the houses were quite dazzling. A long line of barges was making its slow way down the river, and all Dinant seemed half asleep. There was service going on in the Cathedral, as they call it, and we looked in for a moment, and sat down to rest before an image of the child Jesus holding out His tiny arms above a bower of white daisies and pink azaleas. It was very restful there, with some sweet-faced nuns saying their evening prayers, on the prie-dieu chairs before us, and we went home through the fruit market-place in the late dusk, to bed.

We were to start next morning at eleven, and at eleven we prepared to get into the diligence. Of course we were to go on the top, I presumed, and L—— made inquiry of the waiter as to whether there was a short ladder by which to make the ascent. I am thoroughly convinced of one fact, viz., that our waiter was a lineal descendant of Mrs. Grundy's. If ever there was a stickler for propriety it was he; he looked at me with a solemn shake of the head when I announced my intention of going outside, and his glance was severe.

*"Mais, mademoiselle, ce n'est pas joli pour vous!"*

I think L—— was really abashed, but to rumble on *inside* that stuffy vehicle was out of the question. I mounted by the wheel, L—— followed hastily, and we left Dinant, and the waiter looking after us in unmitigated disapproval. I do not greatly care if I never see that waiter again.

The diligence drive was very delightful. We went along pretty fast, changing horses at every *estaminet*, and there were seventeen on the way, and at every *estaminet* the driver had a glass of *piquet*; I believe this is a kind of mild gin. Fortunately it is mild, and the glasses are small. We struggled with a *coque*, but as we had no hammer we failed to break off anything larger than a penny, and that piece was exercise enough in the way of eating till we reached Rochefort at nearly eight o'clock.

The driver was not loquacious; perhaps the *piquet* had a somniferous effect; perhaps he despised our accent; at all events he talked very little, and we were the only passengers. One curious thing which we noticed, when the road wound through the forest, was the number of little headstones, and when L—— inquired to whose memory these were placed the invariable answer was, "To a stranger who perished there—accidentally." We really began to feel nervous, but our Gladstone bags were modest and our appearance, I suppose, humble; at all events nothing happened. We drove into Rochefort with great *éclat*, for a herd of cows frightened the horses and got into the way as only cows can; we were nearly pitched over the bridge, and drove into Rochefort at a really fine pace.

Every one who goes to Rochefort goes to the famous Grotto of Han. Mr. David Christie Murray has a good deal to do with that, for most of the scene of his charming novel, "First Person Singular," is laid in Rochefort. We did not go, for the plain but simple reason that the excursion is a pretty expensive one; we told ourselves we had seen the grotto at Dinant, and that we had no desire to see this one, which had no doubt been over-praised, and we tried to believe what we said. I don't know if there is anything to be seen at Rochefort except the grotto at Han; if there is we did not see it. We were distinctly disappointed with Rochefort, and the church was hopelessly, horribly, irredeemably new! It looked as if the plaster was not yet dry. We shook the Rochefort dust, and there was a good deal of it, from our feet, and started for La Roche.

We made the first part of the journey by train, and then we went by steam car. That part was really delightful. The odd way in which that car ambled gently along through roads, and orchards, and meadows, by *estaminets* and *cafés* and houses, by chapels and through fields! Now we were in an orchard, rich in lush grasses, soft and feathery-headed, or long and green, where the pink apple blossom was something to rejoice the heart, and where soft-eyed cows paused in their mid-day meal to regard us with patient surprise. Now an old priest was coming out of his chapel, where he had been saying mass, and he mopped his hot face and took *Le Petit Journal* from the conductor. Now we were in a farm-yard, and the hens scuttled away in high wrath and dudgeon. Now we paused to let all the male passengers alight for *piquet* at the *estaminet*, and now we were steaming along by the river's edge. Certainly it was original. I wondered what Mr. Ruskin, who does not like railway travelling, I believe (he says you might as well be a parcel), would say to this. One thing is, you can really see the scenery, and the conductor stops wherever you like. But at last we reached La Roche.

In leaving the car we seemed to leave the world! La Roche, dear, simple, sunny La Roche, is as yet unspoilt by the world. We went straight to the hotel described by the guide-book, and this time we were not deceived; it was all, and more than all, our fancy had painted it. Here we paid the modest sum of four francs a day each for lodging and board, and we only remarked, after our first experience of *souper*, that we fervently hoped we might always live as well, though we certainly did not expect to do so. This hotel is kept by M. Meunier; he is very old now, and his work-a-day time of life is past. Joseph the waiter is his factotum and does everything, and M. Meunier sits in his blue ouvrier's blouse, outside on a bench, and smokes and "looks frae him." He used to nod and smile to us when we passed, relapsing into the peaceful, unseeing gaze of the very old; the old Burgo-master has had a busy life, and now he is content to sit in the sunshine and wait God's time. "Age is a time of peace" to him, and he can say, like Henry the king, "My crown is called content; a crown it is that seldom kings enjoy," and content is indeed "our best having."

We had reached La Roche in the evening, and we were shown our room by Marie, the chambermaid, who pointed the castle to

us from the window. We could see it in the pale evening light, frowning on a hill which stands just above the village, and the river, the Ourthe, wound its blue way just below. There was a rounded stone gateway, and battlements covered thickly with ivy, and in the grassy courtyard of the castle there were four or five pines. They seemed to guard the castle still, and their tops had caught a little of the sun's dying gold, and almost dazzled the eye. Ruskin has written exquisitely of pines, and he has noticed this very effect: "It seems as if these trees, living always among the clouds, had caught part of their glory from them; and themselves, the darkest of vegetation, could add yet splendour to the sun itself."

The next day we went off to the pine woods at once, and while we were at La Roche we lived in the pine woods. If we went anywhere else, we went to the castle and sat under the pines there, and the caretaker, who would not trust us with the key, locked us in. Every day was full of glorious sunshine; it seemed happiness enough to live. In our favourite resting-place in the wood there was an opening in the brown stems, and we could see the Ourthe flowing below us, green grass up to its edge, and great patches of yellow broom everywhere. We had a spirit lamp and a kettle, and here we made tea every afternoon, sitting on the ground, which was strewn by pine needles that seemed to shimmer all around us in a golden-brown haze. If peace was to be found anywhere in this restless world it was surely here, where there was no sound except the tree-tops waving softly and whispering together above our heads, or now and then when a squirrel leapt from branch to branch and gave us just one fleeting vision of a bushy tail and two twinkling eyes.

There were a great many wayside shrines in La Roche; we used to glance into them, and the images were very rude and curious, but the lilac was fresh and lately gathered, and sent out its sweet fragrance as an offering from the humble faithful. The church was very crude, and it was not pretty, either outside or in. There were Japanese lamps in the choir and fairy lamps on the altar, and fearful and wonderful were the tinsel banners and the rosettes; and there I heard the flattest singing that I trust I may ever hear!

At the hotel we were very comfortable. Joseph was very kind and most attentive, and under our very window a winding of the

Ourthe babbled over its brown stones all night, with an intermittent murmur that was peculiarly soothing. One thing, however, Joseph was rather annoying about, and that was the boar's flesh. We asked very soon which of the various *plats* was the flesh of the famous boar, and the next which he handed, Joseph said was the boar. It tasted like jugged hare. Next night there was boar again; this time L. said hers was like veal, and next night the boar I had was distinctly rabbit. We began to regard Joseph with suspicion; the fact is that I believe boars and charcoal-burners are poetic myths as relating necessarily to the Ardennes, only the people keep up the story as *joli pour le pays*.

We spent a lovely week at La Roche, and then we went by carriage and train to Spa. Spa is of the world. There are shops and a promenade, and French toilettes, and the people turn up their noses when you praise La Roche. La Roche! La Roche is nothing, nothing to Spa! We did not want to drink the waters, which are, I suppose, nasty enough to be held as particularly good, so we left and went on to Brussels and Antwerp, "and so," as Mr. Pepys would say, "home."

This is only a sketch, badly filled in, of a few things we saw and did in the Ardennes. As yet they are unspoilt, but I do not believe that will last long. Even at La Roche, when M. Meunier dies, a Brussels firm will buy the hotel; Joseph will be dispensed with, and so will the four francs per day and the peace. Crowds of Belgian, and French, and Dutch tourists will come, and the Great Eastern Railway will send English. That steam car will be replaced by a conventional commonplace train, and at the hotel there will be waiters who speak English! Probably they will find a mineral well, and there will be advertisements of soap and somebody's blacking in all the streets. And excursions from Liège will go to the castle and take a brass band on to the battlements.

But meanwhile these things are not. And oh! these sunny pine woods, that quiet village street where the women chat in the evening light, and sweet-faced *sœurs de charité* pass up and down—"the earth a little greener where their feet have trod"—the ruined steps of the *escalier d'honneur* in the castle, the pines, black against the sunset, the low murmur of the river below it all. Here still there is peace, "as of hands that hold each other and are still."

ETHEL F. HEDDLE.



## A Romance of Modern London.

By CURTIS YORKE,

Author of "HUSH!" "THE MYSTERY OF BELGRAVE SQUARE," "THE BROWN PORTMANTEAU," "DUDLEY," "THE WILD RUTHVENS,"  
"THAT LITTLE GIRL," etc., etc.

### CHAPTER XV.

#### THE MAN AND THE WOMAN.

"Two soul-sides: one to face the world—  
And one to show a woman that he loved her."

\* \* \* \*

"When I gazed into these stars, have they not looked down upon me as with pity, like eyes glistening with heavenly tears over the little lot of man?"

CARLYLE.

"WELL?" said Bee somewhat defiantly.

But her voice trembled, for her nervousness had increased to an almost uncontrollable pitch.

Cyril's continued silence was terrible to her. Perhaps he hardly knew how terrible. As he moved towards her, he was shocked at the ashy whiteness of her face, and the strange look in her eyes. The poor child was beginning to think she had committed some unpardonable social sin, for which who could say what might be the penalty.

"Cyril—for Heaven's sake speak to me," she went on almost hysterically. "It is cruel of you to treat me so."

His face softened.

"I did not mean to be cruel," he said quietly. "I did not speak because I feared I might say more than—I ought to say. I have myself pretty well in hand now, so you need not look so terrified," he added with a pained inflection in his calm voice. He paused, then went on, "I confess I was angry, Bee—more than angry—when I found you in that man's rooms to-night. I certainly object to my future wife indulging in such escapades; and did I not know that you are the most childlike and unworldly of women, I should take a very different view of the matter. As it is, I know you meant no harm. But surely even you would not have cared to be found there by any of Conrath's bachelor friends."

"I shouldn't have cared," sobbed Bee wretchedly. "I wanted to see Douglas by himself, and the only way I could do it was to go there."

"And what had you to say to him of such importance, may I ask?" he inquired coldly.

"It was because—because I was so unhappy," she faltered.

"And have I been so unkind to you, Bee, that you never thought of coming to me with your trouble, whatever it was?" he said, half-sternly, half-wistfully.

"How could I," she broke out passionately—"when it was about you I wanted to speak to him?—because of you I was so unhappy?"

His face whitened a little.

"Indeed! In what way had I caused you any unhappiness? And if I had—in what way could Mr. Conrath put matters right?" he said, leaning his elbow on the mantelpiece, and looking down at her without a vestige of expression on his handsome features. Only a slight involuntary movement of the hand that hung by his side betrayed any emotion.

There was a pause. Then Bee said desperately,

"Cyril—I—I don't want to marry you. I—I want to break off our engagement." As she spoke she looked up at him with pathetic imploring eyes.

"Why?" he asked, briefly and sternly.

"Because"—twisting her fingers in a nervous embarrassed fashion—"because I—I don't love you enough."

"Do you love me any less now than you did on the day you promised to marry me?" he went on in a hard voice.

No answer.

But Cyril, Bee found, was not to be trifled with.

"Did you hear me, Bee?" he said, more gently—but with an evident determination to be answered. "Do you dislike me more now than you did then?"

"No—I don't dislike you at all. But you *know* you promised we should not be married for ever so long. And now—you have spoken to grandfather—and he says that as you wish it, I *must* marry you in a fortnight."

"And this was what you wished to consult your—your friend about?"

"Yes."

"And what did he say, may I ask?"

"Oh, I don't remember all he said," she answered, half-wearily, half-petulantly. "He thinks I like you quite enough, it would seem. And he says it is natural that you should want to marry me soon."

After a pause Sir Cyril said gravely,

"If I had known that the thought of our speedy marriage was such a trouble to you, I should certainly never have suggested it. I have no wish to marry you against your will—or to hurry you in any way. But—I shall not allow you to break off our engagement. Unless"—looking at her steadily—"there is any one else?"

"Any one else?" she repeated.

"I mean any one else you love, Bee. In that case I shall set you free—at once."

"Oh no," she said impatiently. "I can assure you there is no one else I want to *marry*—if that is what you mean."

"Ah!" Cyril made answer, drawing a long breath. "Then I shall not give you up—not while your heart is empty. I may find the way there—some day." Then he added gently, "I must go now. Good-night, Bee. And—if you are troubled or perplexed about anything—come to me, my dear, and trust me to help you to the best of my power."

Then touching her forehead lightly with his lips, he went away. And Bee stood alone in the flickering firelight.

With an impatient little sigh she walked over to the window, pulled aside the curtain, and looked out. The light of the moon lay daintily on the unlovely strip of back-garden, and silvered the grimy walls. Lights twinkled in the back windows of the opposite houses. Through the night came the piteous monotonous crying of a little child. The sound hurt Bee somehow, and tugged at her heart like an actual pain.

\* \* \* \* \*

On the following afternoon, as Conrath was busily correcting a batch of proofs, Sir Cyril Northburgh's card was brought in, followed almost immediately by that gentleman himself.

The two men greeted each other coldly.

"I understood from what you said last night, Mr. Conrath, that you wished to see me to-day," said Sir Cyril, taking the chair Douglas indicated.

"I did," the other answered, looking straight at his visitor. "From your manner last night I could hardly help seeing that—er—you were annoyed to find Miss Adeane in my rooms." He stopped.

Sir Cyril was regarding him steadily.

"I think I gave you to understand that I required no explanation of Miss Adeane's actions," he said slowly. "That was certainly not my object in calling upon you to-day. I frankly

confess that I was something more than annoyed to find her there. That, I imagine, was only natural. But—well, I know from what she has told me that you were not to blame in the matter ; and—er—I have a sort of idea,” he added with a half-smile, “that I made myself rather unpleasant on the subject last night.”

“Well, you did, rather,” acquiesced Douglas, absently making little ink dots on the blotting-paper before him. “But then, you know, I have an idea that so did I.”

“Exactly. Perhaps there were excuses for us both,” answered Cyril, lighting a cigarette. “So suppose we cry quits. Have you any engagement for to-night?” he added.

“No—not until pretty late.”

“Then dine with me at Brooks’s, will you?”

“I have a lot to do,” the other answered doubtfully, turning his eyes upon the enormous pile of proofs that yet lay uncorrected, the yet more formidable pile of unanswered letters, and recalling voluminous sheets of “copy” to be supplied and sent off by the evening’s post.

“Pooh! No man is expected to work after business hours,” observed Cyril languidly. “I think you over-do the thing. Fortune won’t come any faster for your burning the candle at both ends. Fay says you look fagged to death. And I think myself you look uncommonly seedy.”

“All right. I’ll come,” Conrath said in somewhat curt tones.

Whereupon Cyril rose to go, feeling that he had held out the olive-branch in a particularly conciliating way—and, in a word, done all that could have been expected of him. Nevertheless, as he sauntered downstairs and out into the street, he was conscious of an unconquerable hostility in his feeling towards Douglas Conrath—which hostility, if he had only known, was intensely reciprocated by the object of it.

\* \* \* \* \*

Shortly before Easter a particularly happy idea occurred to our friend Fenwicke. It was nothing more nor less than that he and Douglas, Cyril, Bee, and Fay, should go down to Poldornalupte to “rough it” during Easter.

“But”—objected Conrath, when this project was laid before him—“we should want some one to chaperone the girls, you know.”

“Oh, hang it!—yes, I forgot that,” said Fenwicke thoughtfully. “Well—why not get Lady Dinwoodie to go—eh?”

In spite of much coaxing and persuading, however, the latter lady could not be prevailed upon to leave her comfortable home in Bryanstone Square for the wilds of Cornwall. Mrs. Chandleur, therefore, was pressed into the service instead. Mr. Chandleur, to the satisfaction of all, was staying with some farmer cousins in Lincolnshire.

Sir Cyril rather threw cold water upon the idea; but finding himself in the minority, made one suggestion which certainly had common-sense on its side.

"Look here, Fenwicke," he said seriously. "If all the yarns you tell about your old housekeeper down there are true, don't you think it would be as well to—er—take some kind of cook down with you? You know women can't rough it as to food as—er—we can."

Which probably was one word for the women, and two for himself; for Cyril was not at all indifferent to his dinner, and, unless as a matter of necessity, was not particularly fond of roughing it.

"All right," acquiesced the easy-going Max. "It's easy enough to get a cook. I fancy we can put in rather a good time. And if the weather's fine—and with the glass rising as it is, it's pretty sure to be—we can have some boating. The river runs through the grounds, you know, quite handy; and there's a jolly little boat in the boat-house."

For some days before that on which our friends arranged to go down to Poldornalupe, however, the weather was boisterous, cold, and exceedingly wet—which, Fenwicke declared, was a certain proof that it would change almost immediately. As for the barometer remaining steady at "much rain"—well, after all, what was a barometer?

Behold them all, then, in a perfect tempest of wind and rain, descending from a couple of musty flies hired in the village, and being heartily welcomed to Poldornalupe by its light-hearted owner. Then they all streamed into the low-ceilinged old-fashioned dining-room, where some primitive preparations for the evening's meal had been made.

"Dear, dear, this is a poor place," exclaimed Mrs. Chandleur in an undertone to Bee. "But I suppose the drawing-room will be better furnished."

Bee, who knew from Douglas the various deficiencies of Poldornalupe, suppressed the fact that the drawing-room furniture

consisted of a few spidery chairs and tables, that the room was minus carpet and curtains, and that it was shockingly damp into the bargain.

"Come now, this is cheerful!" exclaimed the jovial Max, as he advanced towards the hearth, on which blazed an enormous fire. "Nothing like a fire for welcome—eh! Mrs. Chandleur?"

Here the door opened to admit Mrs. Potts, bearing a gigantic dish heaped up with some mysterious compound of stewed meat and vegetables mingled in unappetizing confusion. This she placed upon the table, saying in a deeply-injured voice,

"Which I shall be glad to know, Mr. Fenwicke, if the pusson with the band-box who has just come into the kitching, is to derange the vittles—or if I'm to do it, accordin' to usual. It's hard when a poor woman's been breaking her back over the fire all day to have a good wholesome dish called 'pig's-wash'—*that* it is!"

And Mrs. Potts wept.

"Ah, Mrs. Potts—how *are* you?" exclaimed Max genially. "Will you show these ladies their rooms? They are tired and cold. I am sure you have got good fires in all the bedrooms. As for the person in the kitchen, she will relieve you of your cooking duties for a few days. Much as we should enjoy a daily repetition of your delicious roasts and stews, we must not impose upon your good nature, Mrs. Potts, by making you work *too* hard—eh?"

Whereupon the worthy Mrs. Potts, much mollified, conducted the ladies to their rooms, where fires hardly inferior in size to that in the dining-room burned cheerily.

Bee and Fay were to share one room. Mrs. Chandleur's was on the opposite side of the corridor. The latter was loud in her lamentations as to the poverty-stricken look of the place, the draughts, and the primitiveness of the general arrangements. But the girls, being young enough and healthy enough to rough it with impunity, saw prospects of much "fun."

Sir Cyril, however, was in a silent rage. Not, to do him all justice, because he foresaw discomfort for himself—which he plainly did—but because he thought Poldornalupe was an outrageous place to bring ladies to. And as a matter of fact, in the present state of the weather, it was anything but a desirable residence—so much the reverse, indeed, that "the pusson with the band-box," after a brief and disparaging survey of her surroundings, took her departure in high disgust by the next train.



So Mrs. Chandleur, assisted by the girls and the triumphant Mrs. Potts, prepared a somewhat scrambling meal. And as the whole party were by this time exceedingly hungry, all deficiencies were laughed over and forgiven.

They all went to bed early, Fenwicke having proved to his own satisfaction that the weather was certain to be all that could be desired on the following day.

But alas! the morning broke in a renewed tempest of wind and rain. Out-of-door amusement was not to be thought of, and the greater part of the day was spent in looking over the house, which was old enough to be sufficiently interesting, though dilapidated and neglected to a melancholy degree. It was to be "restored," Fenwicke said, when the mines paid.

Poldornalupe stood on one of Cornwall's few level stretches. To the east and west rose the rugged hills, now almost hidden by the blinding rain. The river intersected the grounds within a quarter of a mile of the house; to-day it was swollen and turbid, and—as Fenwicke ruefully discovered during the forenoon—had carried away the bridge, which, to be sure, like everything else at Poldornalupe, was sadly out of repair.

Towards evening every member of the party was secretly wishing himself or herself at home—with the exception perhaps of Fenwicke, whose mercurial spirits nothing could damp or subdue. It was decided, however, that if the weather was not improved by the morning, they should take the mid-day train back to town.

But all night long the wind screamed, and the rain descended in sheets. Sleep was almost impossible.

Sir Cyril, whose bedroom was painfully small, and whose bed, therefore, was unpleasantly near the window, woke up about three in the morning to find a perfect fury of rain playing upon him, in conjunction with a strong and bitterly cold wind. The window, which was latticed and old-fashioned, had blown open, and for some time refused to shut. Cyril, after some ten minutes' grim struggle, consigned the window, Poldornalupe itself, and its happy-go-lucky owner to eternal perdition, and shiveringly climbed into his moist bed again. He could not sleep, however, for the storm seemed rather to increase than diminish in violence, and with the first streak of dawn he dressed and went downstairs, where he found his host and Douglas, in their shirts and trousers, literally "bailing out" the hall, which presented the

appearance of a small sea. (I do not know if I have mentioned that all the rooms opening off the hall at Poldornalupe were raised one step above it?) This being the case, it was no easy matter to get rid of the pool of water in which Fenwicke and Conrath were splashing about. Both were smoking, and betrayed an unconcern which showed their present occupation to be no unusual one.

"Hullo, Northburgh!—just in time," exclaimed Fenwicke, handing him a large earthenware jug. "Take this, and I'll fetch another. Keep pouring all the water you take up, out of that window, there's a good fellow. The front door blew in—it often does in stormy weather—and the whole place is flooded."

"So I see," said Cyril, taking the jug, and fixing his eyeglass more firmly into his right eye. "My bedroom is in a similar condition."

Douglas—who had been wading in the direction of the hat-stand, now turned, and said hastily,

"By Jove!—where are the girls sleeping?"

"At the other side of the house," answered Max reassuringly. "They'll be all right."

"Hadn't we better go and see if they *are* all right?" observed Sir Cyril, pausing in the act of scooping up a jugful of water.

"I'll go," said Douglas. "Are they in the west corridor?"

Fenwicke nodded, and his friend went upstairs in haste, just in time to find Mrs. Chandleur, in an awe-inspiring night-cap and dressing-gown, preparing to descend.

"Whatever is the matter?" the old lady said, with some acerbity of look and tone. "I'm sure I've been lying quaking for I don't know the time, thinking burglars were in the house. *What?* The water's got into the hall? Well—I will say, of all the places to ask ladies to come to! There's the wind been banging at my window the whole blessed night—until my nerves are all nowhere; not to speak of the rain pouring down the chimney, putting out the fire. And now the whole place is flooded! I'm sure I wish to goodness we'd stayed at home."

Just then Fay's head peeped cautiously out of her room.

"Is anything the matter, Douglas?" she said nervously. "We heard your voice, and——"

"No, no—nothing particular," he answered hastily. "Is the rain coming into your room? Or have you escaped the general deluge?"

"No—we are all right," was the shivering reply—"except that

we have hardly had a wink of sleep because of the storm. It seems as though the whole house were shaking."

And, indeed, as she spoke a furious blast shook the rickety old building almost to its foundations.

A moment later Bee rushed past Fay into the corridor.

"Douglas—Douglas!"—she exclaimed breathlessly—"do you know that the river has overflowed its banks—that it is spreading fast—in another few minutes it will have reached the house?"

"Good God!" exclaimed Douglas, dashing without ceremony into the room the girls had just left. Like a flash, he remembered hearing one of the miners speak of a time, six years ago, when the river had burst its bounds, flooding the village and the surrounding district, and causing fearful desolation generally.

The dawn was strengthening rapidly, and a glance from the uncurtained window told him that Bee's words were only too true. The swollen waters were within a stone's throw of the house.

With a few reassuring words (which he was far from endorsing) to the terrified women, he ran downstairs. Halfway, he met Fenwicke and Sir Cyril coming up; the former two steps at a time—the latter, with as much haste as he ever did anything.

While Fenwicke and Conrath stood in hurried consultation, Cyril went at once to Bee—who was only half-dressed, and huddled up in a shawl. She was very pale, and her teeth were chattering audibly, half from cold, and half from fear. Fay was equally pale and cold and frightened, but her cousin ignored her completely. He wrapped Bee's shawl more closely round her throat, and said anxiously,

"You didn't get wet, did you, darling?"

"Not yet," she made answer, half-hysterically. "But I think there is every chance of our getting more than wet—soon. Cyril"—she added, grasping him nervously by the arm—"is there—is there danger, do you think?"

"I can't tell you, dear," was the hurried answer. "I wish to Heaven," he added between his teeth, "that that fool had never persuaded us to bring you here."

"That fool" had meanwhile been debating with Conrath as to what it would be best to do—for matters were looking unpleasantly serious. In a very short time the rapidly-advancing water would surround the house, which already seemed to sway and totter under the strong blasts of wind that swept round it from time to time.

"Didn't you say there was a boat, Mr. Fenwicke?" said Fay, who, poor little woman, had quite forgotten that her hair was twisted up over her forehead in funny little metal arrangements called, I believe, "curling-pins," and that they were not at all becoming. However, as the only individual in whose eyes she desired to look well had hardly glanced at her, perhaps it didn't matter.

"Yes—there's the boat," Fenwicke made answer—"if we can get at it. But I expect the boathouse will be carried off by this time——"

But Sir Cyril cut him short.

"Can you swim, Fenwicke?" he asked.

"No—I can't," was the blunt reply.

"Very well, then—you remain here with the women, and Conrath and I will see after the boat. It'll be a swimming business before long," he added in an undertone to Douglas. "The river will flood the whole valley in no time, at the rate it's coming up now."

Even as he spoke the rush of the waters was plainly audible.

Fay sprang forward with a sharp cry.

"Douglas—you won't go?" she said with quivering lips.

"Nonsense," he answered, bending his head to hers, and speaking very gently. "There is no danger, dear. Not so much as there is here, by a long way." And before she could speak, he had followed Sir Cyril and Fenwicke downstairs.

"I'll let you out by the side door," said the latter, as they splashed across the hall. "If we open the other we'll never get it shut again. Hurry! all you know," he added hastily.

The other two nodded, and plunged out into the storm. The water met them a few yards from the house in brown foaming waves. By the dim morning light one could see that it had spread far over the surrounding fields, leaving only the tops of the hedgerows visible.

Conrath and Sir Cyril looked at each other.

"The house won't stand an hour," said the former agitatedly. "Come on, Northburgh—we've no more than time."

A sheet of rain and spray flew in their faces as they waded across the submerged lawn. At first the water reached only half-way to their knees—then, owing to a sudden dip in the ground, it took them breast high. A few yards further on they were swept off their feet altogether, and were obliged to trust to their swimming powers. This was difficult, as their feet caught continually in the half-covered shrubs and hedges, which seemed to meet them at every turn. To reach the boathouse they had to

cross the shrubbery and two fields. It still, apparently, stood firm; but when they were within a few yards of it suddenly rocked and heeled over.

A smothered exclamation broke simultaneously from both men. They were benumbed with cold, and pretty well done up, for the wind was strong and in their faces; besides, they were fearfully encumbered by their wet clothing. The next moment a loud dull crash shivered through the air, sounding far above the howl of the wind and the rush of the water.

"Good God! the house is down!" exclaimed Sir Cyril in a voice of agony.

"No—it is only the west wing," Conrath answered. He had caught at an outstanding branch to steady himself as he turned to look backwards. "But it can't stand much longer," he added hoarsely.

The boathouse was now drifting slowly towards the river's current. It seemed hopeless to think of reaching it, though the men strained every nerve, sometimes swimming, sometimes dragging themselves along by the branches of the trees. For a few minutes the great lumbering thing was wedged athwart a hedge, and they bore down upon it with renewed hope. But just as they were within an arm's length, a sudden fierce gust of wind swept it with swift violence against a sturdy young oak tree. The boathouse was shivered almost to atoms, for it was an old and rickety concern, almost as brittle as touchwood. Both boat and oars, however, were now free, and Sir Cyril, when he had recovered himself somewhat—for he was half-stunned by a blow from the boat's bow—seized one of the oars as it whirled past him. Douglas had already secured the other, and was now making for the boat, which, happily, had been checked in its course by a tangle of half-submerged bushes.

It was no easy task to get on board the tossing little craft, for the wind was blowing a perfect hurricane by this time, and they were drifting rapidly into the current.

They managed it at last, however, and were soon rowing towards the house as steadily as the floating trees and brushwood would permit.

Meanwhile Fenwicke had conveyed the terrified little band of women, including Mrs. Potts (who had packed all her most cherished belongings in an enormous blue and white handkerchief, and was stoically awaiting what she called "the end") to a

room at the west side of the house, from whose windows they could watch the progress of Conrath and Sir Cyril through the muddy, ever-deepening water. Mrs. Chandleur was sobbing loudly, Mrs. Potts was repeating long verses of Scripture, while the two girls, with pale and anxious faces, were holding each other's hands in silence. Fenwicke was alternately making the most cheerful remarks he could think of, and mentally calculating how long the old house would hold out—for the water was flowing all round it now, and rising higher every moment. The rain was still pouring down steadily; the wind, if anything, had increased in violence.

Fenwicke swore a little under his breath as he saw the boat-house turn over.

"They'll never reach it!" he muttered between his teeth. "The wind's dead against them."

It was at this moment that the far-away wing of the house fell with a thundering crash. The rest of the building seemed to tremble and sway ominously with the shock. Mrs. Chandleur and Mrs. Potts shrieked in concert. Even Fenwicke turned somewhat pale; and Fay burst into hysterical tears. Bee remained perfectly still and silent, though her lips were quivering, and her heart was beating fast.

The water was now within a few feet of the window.

Breathlessly they watched the two dimly-seen figures—the smashing of the boat-house—the slow progress of the boat towards the house. It came nearer—nearer. It was close to them. It was under the window.

"For God's sake be quick," said Douglas in a hoarse undertone to Max, as the latter helped Mrs. Chandleur into the boat.

The other nodded. He understood.

Fay came next; then Bee; then Mrs. Potts, firmly grasping her bundle, which Fenwicke, who followed her, seized and unceremoniously pitched into the water.

"Sit still!" exclaimed Douglas sternly, as she made a wild grab after her disappearing treasures—"or I'll send you after it."

Then he and Cyril bent to their oars and rowed with strokes swift and strong—rowed for their lives, and the lives of these others—away from the doomed house. And not too soon. Hardly had they got into the current of the river than they saw the whole building shiver and rock—then suddenly upheave itself as if impelled by some unseen force from below. The next moment, with a long



grinding crash, it crumbled and fell into the seething waters, which by this time stretched far beyond it in their path of destruction.

"Thank God we were in time!" muttered Cyril.

He was looking somewhat pale, and Bee noticed that he was rowing with one hand only.

"Have you hurt your hand, Cyril?" she said anxiously.

"No—nothing much," he said, smiling across at her somewhat languidly.

"Give me your oar, Northburgh," said Fenwicke hastily.

"You look done up—and the boat's fearfully overweighted."

"No—sit still," was the curt answer. "I can manage."

It was quite light now, and bitterly cold. The early morning shone on a dreary scene enough. The hurrying, whirling, discoloured river, spreading—spreading—and creeping stealthily up the sides of the rain-blurred hills; the sullen, lowering clouds; the huddled groups of distressed and lowing cattle, chased by the flood from one place of refuge to another; there was an infinite desolation about it all.

They were out of the current now, and approaching the hill which faced Poldornalupe on the other side of the river. Far up the hill-side was perched a shepherd's cottage. This they made their goal.

As the boat touched the turf, Fenwicke sprang out, and helped out the women. Then, with infinite labour, he and Conrath dragged the boat several yards higher up the slope, and secured her to a stout old ash tree. The rain had suddenly ceased, and the wind had somewhat abated. The chances were that the water would not rise appreciably higher.

The shepherd and his wife received their shivering visitors with effusion, and placed at their disposal the best their poor cottage afforded. Hot tea comforted the feminine portion of the company, and hot whisky and water the masculine.

"I'm afraid you will get your death of cold, my darling," said Sir Cyril, approaching Bee as she stood steaming at the fire.

"Cyril—how frightfully pale you look! Are you ill?" she said quickly.

"Not in the least. I have hurt my wrist somehow, though, and it is rather painful. Part of the boat-house struck it in some way, and I fancy it is sprained or something. It is a mere trifle, you silly child," he added. "Have a little sip of my whisky and water—it will do you good. You look like a small ghost."

Here Fenwicke rose suddenly.

"I am going to take the boat and row across to Catterick's farm," he said. "It must be flooded, for it is on the same level as Poldornalupe. And there are a lot of little children."

"I'll go with you," said Conrath, rising also. "No, Sir Cyril, you had better not come. Your wrist is paining you a good deal, I can see—and it's a long pull up and across the river. Besides, we had better leave as much room in the boat as possible. I suppose there's no fear of the mine, Fenwicke?" he added quickly.

"Oh no, it's all right. There's not the slightest chance of the water getting up there."

From the door-way Fay watched them run down the hill, get into the boat, and push off. She stood there for a long time.

Bee occupied herself in binding up Sir Cyril's wrist, which was evidently paining him greatly. But her thoughts were far away from him, poor fellow, if he had only known it.

The morning, the noon, the afternoon passed, and night fell. The river was no longer rising, nor did it rain any more; but the wind was both cold and strong. There was no moon, only the starlight shed a pale sickly shimmer on the dark tossing waters.

And still Conrath and Fenwicke had not come back.

"I misdoubt me something may have happened to the gentlemen," said the old shepherd, looking from the door anxiously. "There's a heap of heavy rubbish being brought down by the flood. Mayhap the boat is swamped."

Both Bee and Fay turned deadly pale.

"They'll be here shortly," said Cyril reassuringly to Fay. "They have hardly had time to get there and back, you know." Which of course was a palpable untruth, and did not deceive the poor girls in the least.

A few minutes later they had both gone out into the starlight, each torn with a terrible dread—the same dread. They watched the river for what seemed to them a long weary time.

At last Fay grasped Bee's hand convulsively.

"Look"—she said almost in a whisper—"is not that the boat coming back?"

As she spoke a tiny dark speck appeared in the distance, coming rapidly nearer and nearer.

"Yes"—Bee answered with dry lips. "Yes, it is. Oh, thank Heaven!"

They watched in anxious silence. Five minutes passed. They could see the boat distinctly now.

"Bee!"—exclaimed Fay in a tone of sharp agony. "Look! Don't you see? Only one of them has come back!"

"I know," came the answer, in a voice that Bee hardly recognized as her own.

A few minutes crawled by; then Max Fenwicke rowed close to their feet.

Another figure lay at the bottom of the boat—the face still, and white, and rigid. Fenwicke, scarcely less pale, fastened the boat to the tree in silence, and with clumsy fingers that shook visibly.

"Is he dead?" asked Bee harshly.

"I don't know," was the husky answer.

Cyril Northburgh and the old shepherd came hurrying down the slope. As one in a terrible unreal dream, Bee watched their troubled faces—saw Douglas lifted tenderly out of the boat and carried up to the cottage—heard Fay's half-stifled sobs and cries.

Well!—Fay had a right to show her anxiety. But she—Bee? What right had she—except the right of their childish companionship? Ah! what keen bewildered pain was this that shot through her heart—grasping it like an icy hand! Why did such a sick fear hold her? Why did she almost hate the weeping girl who knelt at Douglas's side, in an agony of love and terror? Her heart answered soon enough. She realized for the first time the awful desolation that would fill her life if Douglas were taken out of it. And she realized—*why!* She knew that she loved him—loved him even as Fay loved him—with all the strength of her woman's nature.

Looking up suddenly, she intercepted a swift significant glance between Sir Cyril and the old shepherd. The latter shook his head. He had his hand on Douglas's heart—

With a low, incoherent cry, Bee rushed out into the starlit night, and flung herself down on the dripping grass.

"Oh, I can't bear it!—I can't bear it!" she moaned tearlessly. "Oh God! let him not be dead!—let him not be dead!"

The throbbing stars, with their myriad pitying eyes, looked down unwinkingly on this one sobbing little woman, as they were doubtless looking down on thousands of other sobbing little women, all over the world. It was nothing new to them.

Bee never knew how long she crouched there. It seemed to her hours afterwards when she heard Sir Cyril's voice calling her.

"Are you there, Bee?" he said, his clear tones ringing out on the silent night.

The girl rose.

"I am here, Cyril," she said faintly.

He came up to her and drew her hand within his arm.

"How you are trembling," he said tenderly. "Why are you out here in the damp and cold? You will be glad to hear poor Conrath has recovered consciousness. He will be all right, I hope, in a couple of hours. Fenwicke says they found the farm deserted and under water. They succeeded in saving some of the cattle; but just as they were pushing off again, a heavy beam fell upon Conrath and stunned him. He is a good deal bruised, but not seriously injured. By Jove! we thought it was all up with him half an hour ago, I can tell you. Poor Fenwicke was crying like a child."

Bee did not answer.

Of course if she had been a properly constituted young woman (for fictional purposes) she would have fainted away. The "intense relief would have been too much for her," etc. etc. But healthy young women do not as a rule faint away from excess of joy, or relief, or even fear. At least such has not been my experience of young women hitherto. And Bee was blessed with excellent health, both of mind and body.

So she walked silently back to the cottage by the side of the man who was to be her husband—who was to have and to hold her till death should part them. And she spoke gentle tender words to that other man who was to be Fay's husband—little dreaming that his pain of heart was far greater and bitterer than her own.

## CHAPTER XVI.

"FOR RICHER—FOR POORER!"

"The will-o'-the-wisp of literary fame, which so many pursue all their lives in vain, fortunate if it comes at last to flicker for a while over their graves!"

ANSTEY.

"The men that marry women—

And why they marry them—will always be

A marvel and a mystery to the world!" \* \* \* \*

"Nor even the tenderest heart, and next our own

Knows half the reasons why we smile and sigh!"

KEBLE.

A MONTH had passed since that weird day and night at Poldornalupe, and all our *dramatis personæ* were once more in

London, none the worse for their experiences—with the exception of a few severe colds. May sunshine was smiling everywhere, and the season was in full swing.

Bee attended the usual number of balls and dinners and garden parties, and all the other entertainments which too often make "the grasshopper a burden" in the early English summer. People said Miss Adeane had "gone off" somewhat in her looks. Certainly she was not so pretty as she had been.

Conrath's three-volume novel had just been published, and the critics had kindly admitted that it "did not in any way detract from the reputation of the author of 'Yesterday!'" Some, indeed, had gone further, and pronounced his reputation enhanced thereby. He had a good deal of work on hand just now, and did not scruple to make what his publishers termed "pretty stiff terms" for all he wrote. But I am bound to say he turned out first-class work. He had not been long enough a favourite with the confiding British public to offer it stones in place of bread.

Fortune's caresses, like her buffets, seldom come singly; and it was just at this time that the workings at Poldornalupe once more struck the lost lode, which proved—if not as rich as Fenwicke's dreams—still rich enough to promise a very handsome yearly return for all concerned.

If Conrath had been popular before, he was doubly so now; and, following the advice of his friends and his publishers alike, he dropped his pseudonym of "Michael Armstrong," and wrote under his own name.

Among his letters one morning was one stamped with a blood-red crest. Both crest and handwriting seemed to touch some strangely familiar chord in his memory. The letter was dated from a little post-town in Wales, and proved to be from his father's brother Evan Conrath. It was a nice letter, congratulating his nephew upon his success in the literary world, apologizing frankly for the harshness and neglect of the past years, and finally asking his young kinsman to let bygones be bygones, and pay him a long visit at Berstwith Manor.

Douglas wrote back a civil note enough (he was older now, you see, and more tolerant than in his boyish revengeful dreams)—signifying his willingness to let bygones be bygones, but regretting that his engagements would not permit him to visit Wales in the meantime.

It was fixed that his marriage with Fay should take place at the end of June. Lady Dinwoodie, as a matter of fact, had intimated to him pretty plainly, though without actually putting it into so many words, that she did not approve of long engagements, and that as his position was now so materially improved, she saw no reason for any further delay. And, strange though it may seem, Douglas experienced a certain sense of relief in the thought of his marriage. It seemed to him that it would be easier to sustain the *rôle* of the quietly affectionate husband than that of the devoted lover. And he had a vague idea that in his new ties he might be able to stifle his love for Bee. It was he himself who had suggested June for the ceremony. Lady Dinwoodie had spoken of September, but he had quietly over-ruled her, and held to his point, as the most ardent lover might have done. So June it was to be.

Fay was pleased by his apparent impatience. It lulled to rest a certain uneasy, undefined conviction that had of late awakened in her heart, that her lover was not altogether as other lovers. He was scrupulously attentive to her slightest wish, to be sure, and now that his means were augmented he loaded her with handsome presents. In public his conduct was all that could be desired. But when they were alone, his manner, though infinitely gentle, and at times almost tender, was certainly never lover-like. His kiss of greeting or parting was the merest touch of his lips on her cheek or forehead. He never took her in his arms, never told her that he loved her, never indulged in any of the fond extravagances of speech to which lovers as a class are prone.

But his slightest caress was precious to her — foolish little woman that she was. She loyally told herself that she would not have him different, this coldly-gentle lover of hers; that his quiet, seldom-expressed affection was dearer to her than any wild protestations of devotion could have been. And yet—and yet—if he would only take her in his arms sometimes, only *tell* her that he loved her, only look at her with a deeper expression in his dark eyes than the calm friendly look she knew so well!

She sighed to-night, as she sat in her mother's sombre drawing-room, awaiting his coming.

"He has other things to think of," she whispered to the weird summer twilight. "And besides—he does not love me as I love him. How could he? I think I almost worship him. But ah!"—she murmured passionately—"even if he had no love for me



at all, I should still think it the height of earthly happiness to be his wife. His wife! Douglas's wife!" she repeated softly. "It seems too much happiness!"

And then—her eyes filled with wistful tears.

The voice of Douglas himself made her start.

"All in the dark, Fay?" he said, bending down to kiss her. "Why, my dear—you have been crying! What is the matter?"

Her lips trembled, but she did not speak for a second or two. Then she said in a quivering voice,

"Douglas—shall I make you happy, do you think?—when we—when we are married? I—I am not pretty—nor clever. And I know I have a sharp tongue, and a bad temper. I have none of the qualities your wife ought to have—except—except, oh, my dear! that I do *love* you so!" And she crept into his arms, sobbing passionately.

Douglas was inexpressibly touched. What man would not have been?

"My dear"—he said unsteadily—"you are a great deal too good for me, if you only knew it. If you do not make me happy, it will be my fault—not yours."

"And—and—you *do* love me, Douglas?" Her voice was low and tremulous, and almost inaudible.

A curious impulse of tenderness towards her came over him. Without speaking, he turned her face to his, and for the first time kissed her lips.

And at that moment Lady Dinwoodie entered the room.

\* \* \* \* \*

So the days passed; and it was the night before Fay's wedding-day. She and Bee were sitting before the fire in her bedroom; for the evenings had been chilly of late, though it was mid-June. It was a whim of the bride-elect's that Bee (who, of course, was to be one of her bridesmaids) should sleep at Bryanstone Square to-night.

Fay looked singularly weird and elf-like as she sat leaning her elbow on her knee and her chin on her hand, staring into the glowing heart of the fire. Her fluffy flaxen hair was unfastened and streaming over her shoulders, in almost startling contrast to her dark eyes and eyebrows.

Bee was sitting on the hearthrug, slowly plaiting her shining locks into a long thick pig-tail. She was a little paler and thinner

than when we saw her last ; and her eyes were no longer a child's eyes but a woman's.

"I wish you and Cyril had arranged to be married to-morrow too," said Fay suddenly.

Bee laughed somewhat mirthlessly.

"So Cyril has just been telling me," she said, her soft lips setting themselves in a straight unlovely line.

Fay looked at her curiously for a second or two.

"Poor Cyril," she said then, half under her breath.

"Why poor Cyril?" Bee made answer sharply.

"Don't you know?" was the quiet rejoinder. Then she added, "Sometimes I think—that you will never marry him at all, Bee."

"Then I wish to Heaven," broke out the other with sudden fierce vehemence, "that you could get him to think so too!"

Fay smiled—a strange, quiet smile.

"Do you know my cousin Cyril so little as that?" she said, raising her eyebrows slightly. "Don't you know how tenacious men of his temperament are of any once harboured idea? If you had refused him at first he would have felt it a good deal, I dare say—for his feelings are deeper than you might think—but he would have got over it in time (or looked as if he had), and he would never have spoken of it again. But now—when he has looked upon you as his future wife, when he has kissed you as his future wife, when he has allowed himself to think of you as men like him do think of the women who promise to marry them—he will not let you go, Bee. His will is as hard as iron, though it is so gentle and caressing. He can be cruel—can Cyril. You cannot influence him nor change his purpose because of his love for you, as—as for instance, I might—influence—my Douglas."

Her voice dropped and shivered in pronouncing that name, as with the wave of a swiftly-nearing happiness.

Bee was drearily silent. Her heart echoed Fay's words, and acknowledged that they were true. She remembered the gentle inflexibility of her lover's refusal to give her up—"not while her heart was empty." And—she could not tell him. Ah no—no!

She loved Fay sincerely. In all these years their friendship had never been broken. But would she have been human, think you, if—in the light of her awakened heart—she had not felt a certain sick passion of jealousy towards her girl friend, on this, the eve of Douglas's wedding-day?

God only knew how terrible had been her struggles with her heart during these past long dreary weeks. Poor little soul! She could not understand it—she could not fathom it—this strange new pain that ate her heart by day and night. She felt ill. She looked ill. And, as I have hinted, people were beginning to notice that she did. I don't know if Fay had noticed it. If she had not, perhaps it was hardly to be wondered at. There is a species of self-absorption, you know, tacitly allowed to brides-elect—though it is denied, I know not why, to their bridegrooms. As the time of her marriage came nearer—nearer—Fay had lost her fears and misgivings, and yielded herself unresistingly to a mental whirl of half-incredulous joy; a joy that shone in her eyes and thrilled in her voice, and at times made her look almost pretty. And Bee—silently fighting down her newly-born love—envied her with all the strength of her fresh, untried, undisciplined nature. Nevertheless, she had a curious child-like belief that after to-morrow her love would surely fade back again to that old tender sister love from which it had its birth. When Douglas was married, the poor thing argued, surely she could not be so sinful as to love him with this strange new passion of her womanhood?

Presently Fay spoke again.

"I wish we were going to be away for a longer time," she said thoughtfully. "I think Douglas ought to give up writing for a month or two. He works too hard, I think. Sometimes he has quite a jaded, nervous, almost haggard look. Don't you think so?"

"I don't know."

"Oh, Bee, you do know. You have often said so. For my part, I don't see why he should write any more in the meantime. He has made a name; and between his books and those mines he has made a comparative fortune—so why not rest on his oars, so to speak?"

Bee mechanically took up the poker, and stirred the bits of glowing coal between the bars until they fell tinkling upon the hearth. Then she said somewhat irrelevantly,

"Cyril says that if you want to make a name in literature you must either publish one very clever book or a great many stupid ones."

"I don't see the inference," said Fay, flushing a little.

"Ah!" was the dry answer. "Well, don't let Douglas see the inference either. A man—even a clever man—is so very much what his wife makes him, you know. And excess of worldly bliss is apt to dull the imagination—just a little. I fancy genius is a

plant that flourishes best in uncongenial soil, and under gloomy skies. You're too fond of Douglas, Fay," she added in a hard, high voice. "At least, you let him see too much that you are fond of him. You'll spoil him — before a year has passed. There's nothing so easy to spoil as men."

Then, without the slightest warning, the speaker burst into a storm of hysterical tears.

"I hope you will both be happy," she sobbed. "Oh, I do hope you will both be very, *very* happy."

Fay cried a little too. But through her tears she smiled dreamily.

"Happy!" she murmured. "Ah yes, we shall be happy."

I need not describe the wedding. If you take up one of those journals so dear to our womankind, you will probably find full details of perhaps a dozen similar ceremonies. Everything went off well—even the weather was all that could be desired. Max Fenwicke was "best man," and looked as radiant as though he himself had been the bridegroom. Indeed, he looked several degrees more radiant than the bridegroom did, for the latter was wretchedly pale, and evidently extremely nervous.

Fay, perhaps, had never looked better in her life than she did on this, her wedding morning. There could be no possible doubt of her happiness. She seemed to move, and speak, and think in a curious waking dream—until she found herself alone with her husband in the railway carriage.

His first observation was perhaps, for a bridegroom, unique.

"Thank God—it is over!" he exclaimed, as he leaned his head back on the dusty blue cushions, and passed his hand wearily across his forehead.

He spoke irritably, and there was an unmistakable frown on his face.

Fay made no reply. She was "glad it was over," too. She longed to creep close to him, and tell him how happy she was, how she loved him, how good a wife she meant to be to him. But something intangible in his look and attitude restrained her.

Presently he asked her if she would like the window down, and on her replying in the negative, busied himself in cutting for her perusal the pages of several of the weekly periodicals, of which he had laid in a pretty fair supply. Then, having ascertained that she was quite comfortable, that she would rather not change places with him, that she felt no draught, etc., he leaned back in

his place with folded arms and closed eyes, and to all intents and purposes appeared to be going to sleep.

But his wife did not read the papers he had cut for her. She sat looking out of the window, her mouth somewhat drooping, her eyes just a little misty. The old vague unsatisfied pain was creeping round her heart. Was it any wonder? She was not dreaming now.

As for Douglas, I can really find no adequate excuse for him. He was conscious of behaving badly. It is not matrimonial etiquette, I fancy, to leave your newly-made bride to her own meditations, in what ought to be a blissful solitude *à deux*, while you shamelessly snatch forty winks, or appear to do so—which is just as bad—under her very eyes. And this was what our friend Douglas was doing. He was desperately tired, to be sure, for he had been working early and late for the last few weeks to get all his literary engagements fulfilled sufficiently to allow him to take this fortnight's holiday. Also he had been up all night, and was in what Bee used to call one of his "moods." But though these might be reasons, they could hardly be termed excuses. And if I say he was not asleep, but very far from it (as was really the case), I'm afraid it only aggravates matters. As a matter of fact, he was feeling utterly worn out in mind and body. For a long time he had been greatly over-taxing his strength, and neglecting himself in many ways. And his mental emotions of late had been strong and exciting. He looked forward to this brief wedding-journey of his as a kind of restful oasis in life's battle.

Perhaps it is needless to say he had no intention of playing the part of the utterly devoted husband. He meant to do his duty by his young wife; he meant to be tender and affectionate, and scrupulously careful of her wishes and comfort. With the curious short-sightedness of masculine vision, he trusted she would never divine the absence of that love without which all tenderness and affection and care are to our foolish, innocently-adoring women as less than nothing. And, as this mental attitude of his was necessarily totally unsuspected by the poor little woman whom he had just taken "for better, for worse," it is natural to predict that waves and billows of disenchantment threatened her matrimonial sea.

I am tempted at this point to make a slight digression and a few painfully trite remarks as to our habitually unfair treatment of the weaker sex. Even in our grandest passions, when the first glamour is over, we expect so much, and give so little. Our

hearts may hold so many idols, of one kind and another. The heart of the woman we love must hold but one. And yet—they have their revenge on a few of us, after all. The dear, tender, wily Delilahs! The few avenge the many. Here, too, the law of compensation swings its marvellously even balance. Here, too, our arrows (shot heedlessly into the air) have a way of finding their billets in the hearts of our better selves—and rankling there in a particularly unpleasant way.

To return to our bride and bridegroom. They were nearing one of the large junctions now. And as the train slackened speed somewhat, Douglas opened his eyes and sat up. Perhaps something in his wife's face and attitude—something undefined, desolate, infinitely sad—touched him. Perhaps the utter restfulness and quiet of the last hour had soothed alike his nerves and his temper. I cannot tell you. I think, however, that he had the grace to feel a little bit ashamed of himself. Indeed he said as much; and Fay accepted his apologies with a few brief words and a smile that was not very far from tears.

As the train left the station again, he changed his seat for the one next Fay's. Then, without speaking, he put his arm round her, drew her gently towards him and kissed her.

And though the caress was utterly without passion, and even held but little tenderness, it satisfied her, poor child, and her heart beat like an imprisoned bird.

He held her closer; and his voice trembled as he whispered, "God helping me, I will be a good husband to you, Fay. Only be patient with me, my dear, and forgive me when I disappoint you, or hurt your dear, loving little heart. Will you, Fay?"

Ah! what would she not have forgiven him? For answer she nestled close to his heart, and clasped his fingers almost convulsively in hers.

A keen compassion for this loving trusting woman whom he was so ruthlessly deceiving, surged up in Douglas's soul.

"My little wife," he murmured, remorse stabbing at his heart-strings.

But Fay only heard his murmured love-words, and thanked God silently for the good that had come to her.

On, on swept the train through the still June afternoon.

"Whom God hath joined together, let no man put asunder."

*(To be continued.)*